

UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE NUEVO LEÓN
FACULTAD DE FILOSOFÍA Y LETRAS
ÁREA DE ESTUDIOS DE POSGRADO



TEACHING CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY TO USE ENGLISH
THROUGH PRAGMATICS.

PRODUCTO INTEGRADOR DE APRENDIZAJE QUE PARA OBTENER EL GRADO DE
MAESTRIA EN LINGÜÍSTICA APLICADA A LA ENSEÑANZA DE LENGUAS
EXTRANJERAS
PRESENTA

YARESI SINAI RODRÍGUEZ CARREÓN

SEPTIEMBRE DE 2018

ASESOR
MTRO. DAN ISAI SERRATO SALAZAR

FACULTAD DE FILOSOFÍA Y LETRAS
SUBDIRECCIÓN DE ESTUDIOS DE POSGRADO

ACTA DE APROBACIÓN DE PROPUESTA DIDÁCTICA

(De acuerdo al RGSP aprobado el 12 de junio de 2012
Arts. 68, 77, 104, 115, 116, 118, 119, 120, 121, 126, 146 y 148)

Título de la Propuesta Didáctica

“Teaching children with intellectual disability to use English through pragmatics.”

Comité de Evaluación de la Propuesta Didáctica

Mtro. Dan Isai Serrato Salazar
Director



Mtra. Laura Alicia Robles Treviño
Lectora



Mtra. Irma Esparza Moreno
Lector



San Nicolás de los Garza, N.L., Septiembre de 2018

“ALERE FLAMMAM VERITATIS”



Dra. Irma María Flores Alanís
Subdirectora de Posgrado



AREA DE ESTUDIOS
DE POSGRADO

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my best gifts in life, family and the giver of life, Jesus:

To my incredible husband, *Edgar Enríquez*, who has supported me during these years of study by believing in me and loving me unconditionally, and who has encouraged me to always do my best.

To my beloved dad, *Javier Rodríguez*, who encouraged me to take this step on my academic preparation and has supported me and help me through the process.

To my beloved mom, *Dora Carreón*, who has always being there to help me and advise me in every single step of my life with love and patience.

To my beloved brother, *Samuel Rodríguez*, who makes me laugh when circumstances become hard and has helped me during these process by showing me his love in different ways.

To my beloved and missed grandma, *Amparo Luna*, who always believed in me in an exceptional way, with her love she encouraged me when I could not believe. I miss you and wish you could be here, but I know you are be very proud of me.

And to *Jesus Christ*, who has always guided my life, supported me, loved me, provided me for everything, and most important, who gave his life so I can live now. To Him be all the glory!

So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. (1st Corinthians 10:31, New International Version)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special acknowledgements to those who made possible the realization of this thesis:

Thank you to the *Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León (UANL)* and to *MC. Ludivina Cantú Ortiz*, principal of the Facultad de Filosofía y Letras.

Special thanks to *Dra. María Eugenia Flores Treviño*, who oriented me and helped me through the two years of the master's.

Special thanks to *Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología (CONACYT)* that supports my studies financially.

Special appreciation to *MLA. Dan Isai Serrato Salazar*, my thesis director, who guided me patiently through all the process and invested his time and knowledge in helping me.

Thank you!

ABSTRACT

The current investigation focuses on students with intellectual disability being integrated to the English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom in Mexico in a private school. The difficulties that these students are facing are observed specifically in a middle school in Monterrey, Mexico. The problem is that students with intellectual disability are not learning English and they do not show a big progress in their foreign language acquirement. There are some important features of these children to take into account in order to teach them English successfully, for example, two main problems that students with intellectual disability present are: troubles to acquire a language and problems to socialize and communicate in an understandable way (Harris, 2010). Three different instruments (a diary of the investigator, a questionnaire and a rubric for observation) are used in order to confirm the existence of these problems. Based on these difficulties, strategies based on pragmatics are presented as a tool for those English teachers that have special students in their classrooms. Strategies based on pragmatics are useful to children with intellectual disability because they can help them to understand real life situations in a foreign language. According to Spelber and Wilson (quoted by Mira Ariel, 2010, p.9) "Pragmatics...is relevant to linguistics because of the light it throws on the semantics/pragmatics interface", in other words, teachers can teach English to students with intellectual disability by teaching them specific responses for specific situations. Teaching real language in real situations can facilitate the understanding of a foreign language of a student with intellectual disability.

INDEX

Page

DEDICATION

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION

1. PROBLEM DEFINITION

1.1 Literature review.....	1
1.2 Problem statement.....	3
1.3 Justification.....	4
1.4 Objectives.....	5
1.5 Research questions.....	5
1.6 Hypothesis.....	5

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Special educational needs.....	6
2.2 Intellectual disability.....	7
2.3 Language pragmatics.....	9
2.4 Speech acts.....	10
2.5 Role-play and the Communicative approach.....	12

3. METHOD AND PROCEDURES

3.1 A general description of the context.....	13
3.2 Methodological design.....	14
3.3 Techniques of data collection.....	14

3.4 Instruments.....	16
3.5 Data Analysis.....	16
3.6 Conclusions of data analysis.....	18

4. DIDACTIC PROPOSAL

4.1 Proposal's design.....	37
4.2 Lesson plans.....	43
4.3 Analysis of proposal's application.....	54

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	70
---	----

REFERENCES

Appendix #1

Appendix #2

INTRODUCTION

One of the most recent challenges that teachers encounter in the modern educational system is: inclusive education. Nowadays, integrating a child with special educational needs to the classrooms has become a law, for example in Mexico the 3rd article of the “Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos” was changed to obligate regular schools to accept children with special educational needs. The article in Spanish dictates that “todo individuo tiene derecho a recibir educación.” In this investigation the focus is primarily on students with a specific special educational need: intellectual disability.

Talking about special educational needs becomes a really wide variety of different necessities, but it is important to specify that the present script is focused just in one: intellectual disability. Intellectual disability can be found sometimes on a child who presents dawn syndrome as well as in a child with mental retardation, but this does not mean that there are different types of intellectual disability, but that there are different special educational needs that can present intellectual disability.

In his book, Harris (2010) presents some medical and social problems that affect their learning: “developmental disabilities, such as speech and language problems, problems in attention, cerebral palsy, seizure disorders, social-emotional learning disability... (p.6)” and defines the concept as a “result from impairment in brain function that is called a neurodevelopmental condition that impairs cognition, learning, and adaptive functioning in the everyday world (p.5)”.

Carr et. al (2016) present another definition by The World Health Organization’s International Classification of Diseases:

Intellectual disability (intellectual developmental disorder) is a disorder with onset during the developmental period that includes both intellectual and adaptive functioning deficits in conceptual, social and practical domains. The following three criteria must be met:

- a) Deficit in intellectual functions, such as reasoning, problem-solving, planning, abstract thinking, judgment, academic learning, and experiential learning, confirmed by both clinical assessment and individualized standard intelligence testing.
- b) Deficits in adaptive functioning that result in failure to meet developmental and sociocultural standards for personal independence and social responsibility. Without support, the adaptive deficit limit functioning in one or more activities of daily life, such as communication, social participation, and independent living across multiple environments such as home, schools, work and community.
- c) For a definite diagnosis of mental retardation there should be a reduced level of intellectual functioning resulting in diminished ability to adapt to the daily demands of the normal social environment. (p.6)

As it is seen, students with intellectual disability present problems acquiring a language; that is the reason why English teachers should be aware of the areas that affect a foreign language acquisition in a student with intellectual disability, but problems for these children are not reduced only to language problems, another important difficulty in which the current research centers too is: the social issue, just as Carr et al (2016) mentions in his definition of the concept: students with intellectual disability present difficulties to understand social rules, interact and to communicate in an acceptable way to other people.

The problems mentioned above are the reasons of the main goal for this investigation: Designing strategies based on language pragmatics that can be helpful to teach children with intellectual disability to understand how to use a foreign language in different scenarios of the everyday life. In order to provide effective strategies for English teachers the investigation considers different acts of speech (speech acts are part of language pragmatics) in different situations that can be used to teach children with intellectual disability about how to ask, react and respond in an acceptable way in their foreign language, English in this case

1. PROBLEM DEFINITION

1.1 Literature review

Some similar problems as the one is being described in the current investigation have been object of concerned in other parts of the world. In this part, 3 different studies related to the problem statement are presented; the first one focusing on students with special educational needs, specifically on language necessities, which is helpful for the current investigation in order to have a better knowledge about language acquirement necessities. The second one focuses on a more specific case: autism related to language pragmatics' acquirement problems (people with autism normally presents intellectual disability) and the last one focuses on the importance of pragmatics on language, which is reliable for the current investigation due to it confirms the importance of teaching language pragmatics explicitly.

In her investigation, Dopitova (2007) describes some needs that students with learning disabilities present. The investigation takes place in the Czech Republic which has a multi-track system; this means that students with special educational needs have the options of attending to regular classes, attend to specialized classes in regular schools or going to special schools. Despite the existence of special schools for kids with special educational needs, government try to promote inclusive classrooms to provide special students with the same opportunities that regular students have.

Focusing on the learning of a foreign language she found out some of the difficulties that students with special educational needs have on learning a foreign language, for example: "incorrectly repeat sounds, words, phrases or sentences that are provided by the teacher or

through an audio recorder; difficulties to stay focused on or remember a verbal presentation or lecture; trouble with understanding and applying grammatical rules (forming plurals and possessives, using proper word order), especially when these rules are different from the native language, and have difficulty gaining meaning from spoken language” (p. 11), just to mention some.

The problems found by Dopitova (2007) are closely related to the problem statement of the current investigation, especially those related to the language pragmatics acquirement problems; she mentioned that students have problems with applying grammatical rules to their foreign language. That is what pragmatics deals with. In addition, she mentions that teachers do not use any specific strategy or method to teach these students which is similar to the problem presented in the current research.

Next research is made by Kasher and Meilijson (1996) from the Department of philosophy at Tel Aviv University in Israel. The investigation describes some aspects of autism and explains the syndrome using the theoretical framework of Modular Pragmatics of Language in order not only to explain the syndrome as a communication disorder, but as disorder of pragmatics of language which is actually one of the characteristics of the current research: Showing a specific difficulty on acquiring a language for students with intellectual disability. Even when the current research does not focus on autism, this investigation by Kasher and Meilijson (1996) is helpful because most people with autism present also intellectual disability.

The third research is by Hemilse (2011) from the Universidad de Buenos Aires at Buenos Aires, Argentina. In her literature review Hemilse (2011) describes how Ludwig Wittgenstein and Alfred Schutz propose a relation between language and the social world. In her conclusions she highlights that language pragmatics is necessary in order to communicate. She goes beyond grammar structures of a language or vocabulary, she emphasizes how important language pragmatics is, because without the social rules for communication, without an appropriate context and knowledge about how language has to be used communication cannot be effective.

Based on the theoretical background here presented, the current investigation tries to develop a strategies that can be helpful for teacher to teach EFL and for their students with intellectual disability, even when none of the researches above deal directly with intellectual

disability, the problems presented in the investigations are closely related to intellectual disability because of two main reasons: first, intellectual disability is a special educational need, and second: intellectual disability is presented in most cases of autism. The theoretical background presented refers to the main needs of these students, the importance of teaching language pragmatics to them and the importance of developing strategies in order to help them to use EFL. This information is the foundation for our own investigation.

1.2 Problem statement

The intention of this investigation is not to write an exhaustive list about every EFL learning necessity that a student can have, but to focus on one, intellectual disability. The problems that today EFL Mexican teachers are facing trying to teach students with intellectual disability have a story. In Mexico by the year of 1970 the government decided to create the “Dirección General de Educación Especial” (DGEE) (Cardenas and Barraza, 2014). This fact was very significant in the evolution of teaching in Mexico because it was an important contribution for the inclusion of students with special educational needs in the Mexican education system. By the 80’s another important step was given in contribution to special education, a new program called “grupos integrados” started working in Mexico.

The main goals of these groups were to teach reading, writing and basics Math (Cardenas & Barraza, 2014). At the same time that these groups were working officially in Mexican public schools other important institutions for these students were created as a support for them, for example: “Centros de Rehabilitación y Educación Especial” and “Centros de Capacitación de Educación Especial” and “Centros de Atención Múltiple” (CAM).

According to Cardenas and Barraza (2014) by the end of the scholar year 1991-1992 the program for “grupos integrados” was over. With the education reform of 1993 a new concept appeared for Mexican education: Inclusive classrooms. By 1994 the government decided to dissolve these “grupos integrados” to include students with special learning needs to the regular classrooms. Since this new law appeared the government began to create awareness about inclusion in regular schools. This inclusive factor has been increasing among public and private schools.

This investigation focuses on 5 students with intellectual disability who are learning EFL in a middle school in Monterrey, Mexico with this new system of inclusive classrooms. There are 5 students that present intellectual disability in the school, classrooms have more than twenty students (teenagers, to be specific) and teachers have to think about how to develop a foreign language in every one of them. The problem is that they do not learn in the same way that their classmates do.

It is a challenging task to teach a foreign language to a student that presents intellectual disability in a context where there are not materials adapted to these students, and having around 20-29 teenagers make it more difficult to focus on how to teach students with intellectual disability. No doubt there is real problem and a real challenge for English teachers in Mexico, but challenges always bring important discoveries and ideas for improvement.

1.3 Justification

The main motivation to research about a problem such as this, begins with a personal experience. As an EFL teacher so many challenges have to be faced in the classroom; every student with his unique learning characteristics represents a challenge for the teacher and teachers must be prepared for everything that could happened in classrooms. New experiences are brought with every new scholar year, and new experiences mean new learnings; that is exactly what happened on 2015 while teaching 5th grade students in a private bilingual school.

A 10 years old boy arrives to my EFL classroom, but he was not exactly as the other children. He did not pay attention to the teacher, he was distracted, talking alone and repeating instead of answering, he had autism and his autism presented intellectual disability. At the beginning frustration appears, there is not a manual that every student with special educational needs carries about how to teach him, but then with a positive attitude and respect, a teacher can discover what a great experience it can be to have a special student in his EFL classroom. At the end of the scholar year my student was understanding English and beginning to use some words and phrases. His achievement was mine too.

Students with intellectual disability can feel very frustrated while the teacher is trying to teach them something that they cannot understand. At the time that teachers find out that special

students are not learning with the methods they usually use to teach, they have to face a crossroads: Giving up on them or looking for preparation and strategies to teach them. First option is the easiest, especially in a large EFL classroom where controlling regular students make it almost impossible to pay special attention on these students with intellectual disability, but second option is the best and this research tries to motivate teachers to choose it.

1.4 Objectives

General objective:

- The main purpose of the present investigation is to create strategies that can be helpful for English as a Foreign Language teachers (EFL teachers) who teach students with intellectual disability.

Specific objectives:

- To describe the specific difficulties that students with intellectual disabilities present on acquiring a language.
- To describe the social interaction problems that students with intellectual disabilities present, and how they impact to the learning of a foreign language.
- To understand how social and language acquirement problems impact on getting the pragmatic of a foreign language.

1.5 Research questions

- What are the problems that students with intellectual disability have on acquiring a foreign language?
- How does having social interaction problems influence the learning of a foreign language?

1.6 Hypothesis

Using strategies based on pragmatics facilitates the foreign language usage of students with intellectual disability.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Special Educational needs

As it was mentioned before, this investigation does not pretend to define the concept in a way that it can be totally understood for everybody, but it pretends to be functional enough in terms of the application of the strategies here presented. In order to do it, the definition and perspective of Halliwell (2003) is used as the reference of special educational needs in the current research:

Children have a special educational need if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them (Halliwell, 2003). A very simple definition that works for the research in terms of foreign language acquisition. If there is someone who presents real language learning difficulties and needs special language educational provision, then this is a students that presents special educational needs. This definition still sounds a little vague, but it becomes clearer when Halliwell (2003) explains what a learning difficulty is:

Students have a learning difficulty if they...

- a) have significantly difficulty in learning than the majority of students of the same age.
- b) have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools

Applied to the foreign language in special educational needs, Halliwell (2003) makes a distinction between a child who struggles with language learning just because it is a foreign language, and a child who has significant difficulties to acquire a foreign language. That is what

this investigation sees as a special educational need, not a blind or deaf student for example, because they do not necessarily present learning difficulties.

Once the concept of special educational needs has been established it is necessary to specify the focus of the term in the current research, which helps the reader to understand better the investigation and identify the specific need that this investigation is focusing on, intellectual disability.

2.2 Intellectual disability.

The definition of the concept has been debated and given for different institutions and people over the years, new researchers have contributed in the development of the term. One definition provided by Foreman (2009) as widely accepted as authoritative is the one provided for the American Association for intellectual and developmental disabilities: Intellectual disability is a disability characterized by significant limitations both in intellectual functioning and in adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social and practical adaptive skills. This disability originates before age 18.

Carr et. al (2016) present other two definitions by The World Health Organization's International Classification of Diseases:

Intellectual disability (intellectual developmental disorder) is a disorder with onset during the developmental period that includes both intellectual and adaptive functioning deficits in conceptual, social and practical domains. The following three criteria must be met:

- a) Deficit in intellectual functions, such as reasoning, problem-solving, planning, abstract thinking, judgment, academic learning, and experiential learning, confirmed by both clinical assessment and individualized standard intelligence testing.
- b) Deficits in adaptive functioning that result in failure to meet developmental and sociocultural standards for personal independence and social responsibility. Without support, the adaptive deficit limit functioning in one or more activities of daily life, such as communication, social participation, and independent living across multiple environments such as home, schools, work and community.

c) For a definite diagnosis of mental retardation there should be a reduced level of intellectual functioning resulting in diminished ability to adapt to the daily demands of the normal social environment. (p.6)

Another simple but important definition is provided by Harris (2010) who states that intellectual disability results from impairment in brain function. "It is called a neurodevelopmental condition that impairs cognition, learning, and adaptive functioning in the everyday world." (p.5). A simple description that can be very useful for any teacher who is trying to understand the kind of disabilities of a student who was diagnosed with intellectual disability.

As an English teacher it is necessary to know what problems can be presented in a student with intellectual disability. In his book, Harris (2010) presents some medical and social problems that affect their learning: "Seizures, language disorder, changing behaviors" (p.6). As it is seen students with intellectual disability present language problems, thus English teachers should be aware of the areas that can affect a foreign language acquisition in a student with intellectual disability.

Carr et. al (2016) provide a description of the language disorder that can be presented on students with intellectual disability:

Persistent difficulties in the acquisition and use of language across modalities (spoken, written, sign language, or other) due to deficits in comprehension or production that include the following:

a) Reduced vocabulary (word knowledge and use)

b) Limited sentence structured.

c) Impairment in discourse.

d) Language abilities are substantially and quantifiably below those expected for age, resulting in functional limitations in effective communication, social participation, academic achievement, or occupational performance, individually or in any combination. (p.32)

The second important concept refers to limitations in adapting environmental demands, this refers to behavior, just as the American Association for intellectual and developmental disabilities emphasizes it as one of the characteristics of people with intellectual disability (Foreman, 2009). Language and behavior are complementary concepts, people express what they are, according to social rules, culture, stereotypes, ideologies, etc. Children with intellectual disability cannot fulfilled the environmental demands because of the lack of comprehension of the rules of the society where they are living. Such a statement presents another big challenge for an English as a foreign language teacher, since it has been demonstrated that language cannot be taught without its culture and a culture without its language, teaching EFL in the area of intellectual disability becomes a really difficult task for the teacher.

2.3 Language pragmatics

The term pragmatics applied to the EFL context might help students with intellectual disability and their teachers, due to the two main problems that they present to acquire a language: (a) language problems acquisition and (b) social interaction problems. Students with intellectual disability have problems to use a language not always because they do not know the words, but because they do not understand how to use them and when. Pragmatics represents a way to teach language by explaining the social norms around it.

The study of language pragmatics arises as an opposition to the thought that linguistic signs have meaning in themselves, stating that signs acquire their meaning by the context of the situation in which they are used. In addition, pragmatic, unlike grammar, is focused on the use of language in different contexts, is descriptive and non-prescriptive and changes according to social norms. This branch of study sees language not only as communication but as action, so that when speaking, the sender is producing speech actions (Searle, 1969).

Pragmatics is defined as "...the ability to deal with meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader) and to interpret people's intended meanings, their assumptions, their purposes or goals, and the kinds of actions (e.g., making a request) that they are performing when they speak or write" (Yule, 1996, pp. 3-4). Pragmatics includes among other things politeness/impoliteness, speech acts (greetings, thanks, requests, compliments, apologies, complaints, etc.), conversational style, humor, sarcasm, teasing,

cursing, discourse markers, conversational implicature (i.e., the implied meaning as interpreted by listeners based on the context of an utterance and their knowledge of how conversation works), and deixis (i.e., words and phrases that cannot be fully understood without additional contextual information - e.g., nominal pronouns like "she" and demonstrative pronouns like "this").

"Language pragmatics studies how people understand and at the same time produce speech acts depending on the situation in which they are. It also studies the variations that occur from one act of speech to another, always taking into account the context in which they occur" (Levison, 1983, p.10). Pragmatics goes beyond the individual meaning of each word, phrase or sentence; it analyzes the context to understand the intention and meaning given by the sender to what he is saying and how the receiver understands the message and decodes it.

The act where the transmitter produces a certain message to the receiver and where both are involved to give meaning to the message is known as negotiation of meanings. In order to understand the meaning that the sender gives to his message, the receiver must share certain characteristics with him to decode the message and understand it. Language pragmatic has studied the characteristics shared by the communication agents and has concluded that in order to understand these they must have (1) a specific social knowledge, (2) similar social status and (3) a similar linguistic and cultural knowledge.

For this reason and in order to EFL students with intellectual disability to acquire the language, teachers must teach language pragmatics to their students. In order to provide them a specific social, linguistic and cultural knowledge.

2.4 Speech acts

A subfield of language pragmatics is speech acts, which are considered by pragmatics as the minimum units of linguistic conversation. Speech acts are part of linguistics because they are in the conversations of any individual, in any culture. When greeting, apologizing, complaining or rejecting something, people carry out different actions, hence the word "acts". People would not commonly relate a complaint with an action, but this branch of linguistics does, and it is based on these actions of speech to study the context in which they are produced.

University of Minnesota's website offers some very good examples and definitions of some acts of speech in English, for example, the act of speech of Apologize:

In American English, people typically use apologies for a variety of reasons such as:

1. To say that they are sorry
2. To explain why the offense happened
3. To make a repair for the offense and maintain a good relationship with the addressee

Complex speech acts like apologies actually consist of a set of routinized patterns or strategies typically used by native speakers of the language. There are five possible strategies for making an apology (Cohen & Olshtain, 1981. pp. 119-125).

- A. An expression of an apology. The speaker uses a word, expression, or sentence containing a verb such as "sorry," "excuse," "forgive," or "apologize."
- B. Acknowledgement of responsibility. The offender recognizes his/her fault in causing the infraction.
- C. An explanation or account. The speaker describes the situation which caused him/her to commit the offense and which is used by this speaker as an indirect way of apologizing.
- D. An offer of repair. The apologizer makes a bid to carry out an action or provide payment for some kind of damage resulting from his/her infraction.
- E. A promise of non-recurrence. The apologizer commits him/herself to not having the offense happen again, which is again situation-specific and less frequent than the other strategies.

A description such as that above is very helpful for an EFL learner to understand the pragmatic of the American English apologies and use them in a correct way, what this investigation seeks for is to adjust an explanation such as this for students with intellectual disability in order that they can understand how to use the foreign language. It is clear that they may not understand a very theoretical explanation such as that presented above, but

through activities and more simple words they should be able to understand speech acts such as this.

2.5 Role-play and the Communicative approach

According to the website of the British Council (BBC) the communicative approach is based on the idea that learning language successfully comes through having to communicate real meaning. "When learners are involved in real communication, their natural strategies for language acquisition will be used, and this will allow them to learn to use the language." (<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/communicative-approach>) In the case of student with intellectual disability these strategies for communication are not natural and need to be taught, that is one of the reasons for the use of roleplays.

According to the BBC in the classroom, activities guided by the communicative approach are characterized by trying to produce meaningful and real communication, at all levels. As a result there may be more emphasis on skills than systems, lessons are more learner-centered, and there may be use of authentic materials. All these characteristics fits perfectly with roleplaying activities.

"Role-play is any speaking activity when you either put yourself into somebody else's shoes, or when you stay in your own shoes but put yourself into an imaginary situation!".

But, Why use role-play?

It is widely agreed that learning takes place when activities are engaging and memorable.

Jeremy Harmer advocates the use of role-play for the following reasons:

- It's fun and motivating
 - Quieter students get the chance to express themselves in a more forthright way
 - The world of the classroom is broadened to include the outside world - thus offering a much wider range of language opportunities"
- (<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/communicative-approach>)

3. METHOD AND PROCEDURES

It is always important to have a method to guide the investigation in order to obtain reliable data. This is to know the context of a research in order to understand completely what the problem is, what factors are contributing to increase the problem, to get a clearer and deep view of how the problem is developing and to get relevant, specific and useful information that can contribute as an alternative in the process of solving the problem.

3.1 A general description of the context

The context where the current research is developed is a private school in Guadalupe, Nuevo Leon. This is a private school with no more than 200 students in middle school. The school develops the English as a Foreign Language classes through a specific bilingual methodology dividing the students in three levels according to their knowledge of English: elemental, intermediate and advanced. During the scholar year 2016-2017 the three grades of middle school incorporated students with intellectual disability, all of them in the elemental English level with one exception, a girl in the advanced level.

3.1.1 Subjects of the study

According to Creswell (2009) subject selection in qualitative research (action research is characterized as qualitative) is purposeful; participants are selected who can best inform the research questions and enhance understanding of the phenomenon under study. Hence, one of the most important tasks in the study design phase is to identify appropriate participants. The sample of this proposal are middle school, between the ages of 12-15. There are 5 students from 2nd grade to 3rd grade of middle school presenting intellectual disability:

- Second grade (Intermediate English): There is one student presenting mental disability.
- Second grade (Basic English): There is one student with mental retardation and another one with epilepsy. Epilepsy has caused mental disability in him.
- Third grade (Advanced English): There is one case of autism (This is the girl in advanced level) and another one of mental retardation.

All of them present different special educational needs, but despite of the differences among the problems of these students they have one characteristic in common: intellectual disability. The issue that they all present intellectual disability makes them candidates for this study because they all present problems to acquire a foreign language (English in this case) and problems to understand how language is used in different social contexts (problems to acquire the pragmatic of a language).

3.2 Methodological design

In order to get reliable information about the problem it is necessary to conduct a research based on a specific methodological design. According to Sampieri (2010) there are two main focuses on methodological designs: Qualitative and Quantitative. Action-research can be considered as a method with qualitative characteristics (Latorre, 2008). In this section action-researched is explained as the methodological design used in the current research and the reasons why this is selected to collect data.

3.2.1 Action research

According to Elliot quoted by Latorre (2008) action-research is the study of a social situation with the purpose of improving the quality of the action itself. He also says that action research is a “reflexive action of human actions and social situations lived by teachers which objective is to comprehend the teachers’ practical problems in order to modify the situation, once it has been deeply comprehended” (Elliot, 1993 quoted by Latorre, 2008, p.24). The reason of using this type of methodology is that there is a reflexive process that leads to an action step during the research.

According to Elliot quoted by Latorre (2008) there are 5 main characteristics of the action research:

1. It is based on discovering and solving teachers/practical problems.
2. It presupposes a simultaneous reflection on means and ends.
3. It is a reflexive practice. Teachers must think and evaluate the quality of their own practice.
4. It integrates theory and practice. The theory is developed through practice, hence practice and theory are independent.
5. It includes other teachers and participants of the teaching-learning process. Providing different perspectives and opinions other teachers, participants or spectators of the teaching-learning process can contribute with essential information to evaluate the process.

3.2.2 Process of action research

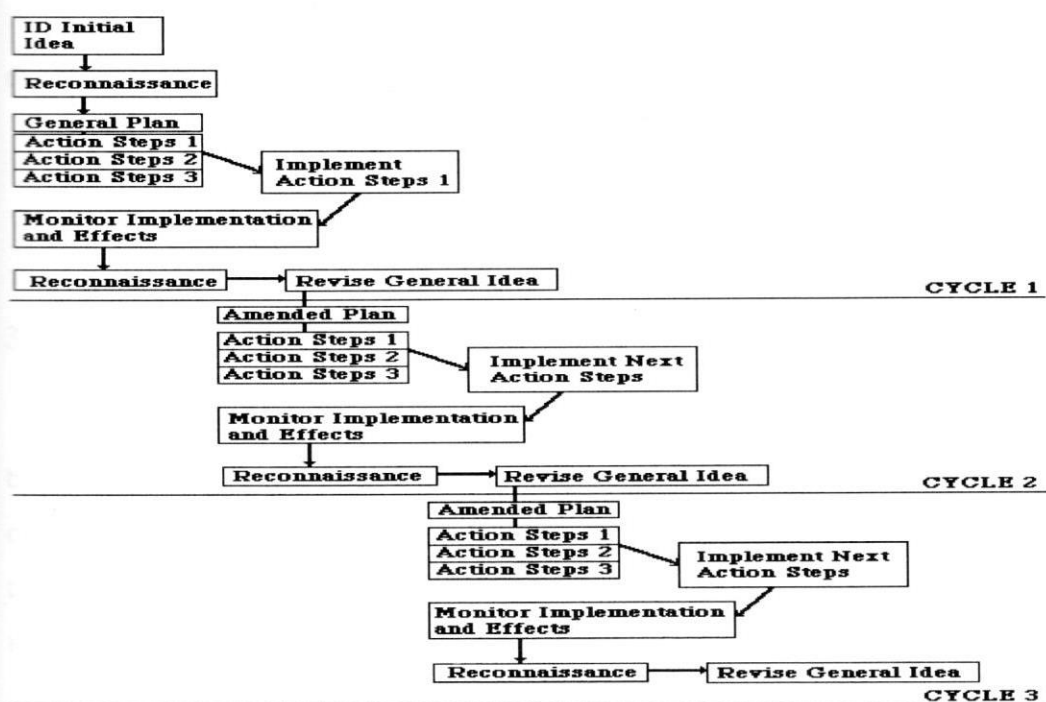


Figure 1. Model of investigation of Elliot (1993).

The current investigation is based on Elliot's model of investigation quoted by Latorre (2008), but taking just the first cycle of the whole process finishing with the revision of the general and first idea (conclusions). It is necessary to begin with a general idea, in this case an

idea to solve an existent problem. Once the initial idea is clear the next step is the recognition of the problem, which is the step that is seen in the current chapter. After recognize the problem and get clearer data about it, the action step is implemented (the didactic proposal in this case) and then an analysis of the results is implemented in order to revise the general idea.

3.3 Techniques of data collection

There are different techniques that can be used for data collection, for example, according to Latorre (2008) there are three main types of techniques: based on observation, based on conversation, analysis of documents and audio-visual media.

1. Techniques based on observation: These techniques are those where the investigator is directly observing the phenomenon. Participant observation, field notes, diary of the investigator, anecdotic registers, and analytic reports are some examples.

2. Techniques based on conversation: Questionnaires, interviews, and groups of discussion.

3. Analysis of documents: Official documents, personal documents, and diaries.

4. Audio-visual media: Photography, audio tapes, and video tapes.

3.4 Instruments

There are three the instruments used for data collection in the current investigation, based on the two types of techniques mentioned before. The instruments are: a guide-list for observation, a diary of the investigator (Latorre, 2008), and a questionnaire. The guide list and the diary of the investigator are applied as direct observation, while the questionnaire is applied to the teachers.

1. Diary of the investigator. The concept taken from Latorre (2008) is applied in the current research as it is described below:

The materials needed for the process were: a special diary for the investigation and a pen. It required immersion in the research field, three English classes with students that present

intellectual disability. Notes about the class were taken, for example, what the observed students were doing, their use and understanding of language, their communication with to the teacher and to other students, etc.

2. Guide-list. The idea was taken from Project Oracle, (Oracle, 2017). This organization created a method to guide an observation, this method is not used in the current research but the idea of creating a guide-list to focus the observation was taken from this project. The guide-list here presented was a special creation for this investigation and has not been applied before.

It is designed in order to accomplish two of the objectives of this investigation:

1. To describe the specific difficulties that students with intellectual disability present on acquiring a language.
2. To describe the social interaction problems that students with intellectual disability present, and how they affect to the learning of a foreign language.

It is divided in three main aspects to observe: Language pragmatics in use, Foreign language acquisition problems, and lack of basic social skills reflected in their communication. Every aspect contains four items, each one is a description of what is expected during the observation. There are three options as answers: frequently, occasionally, and never, the three of them referring of how often the description of the aspect is observed. (An example of the guide-list can be found in appendix # 1)

3. Questionnaire. As it was mentioned before, a questionnaire is a compilation of questions about a specific topic or problem that is answered in a written way. The current research uses an adaptation of the Protocolo Rápido de Evaluación Pragmática (Gallardo 2009) taken from (Maite Fernández Urquiza, 2015). It is used to evaluate the usage of language pragmatics by a Spanish native speaker, but for the purposes of this investigation it has been translated and adapted to evaluate the language pragmatics of English as a foreign language speakers.

The questionnaire was designed for the teachers to answer according to what they perceive of their own students during classes. Using the questionnaire provides the investigator

with a different perspective of the research problem, the perspective of the own teacher that is facing the problem. (An example of the Protocolo Rápido de Evaluación Pragmática can be found in the appendix # 2).

3.5 Data analysis

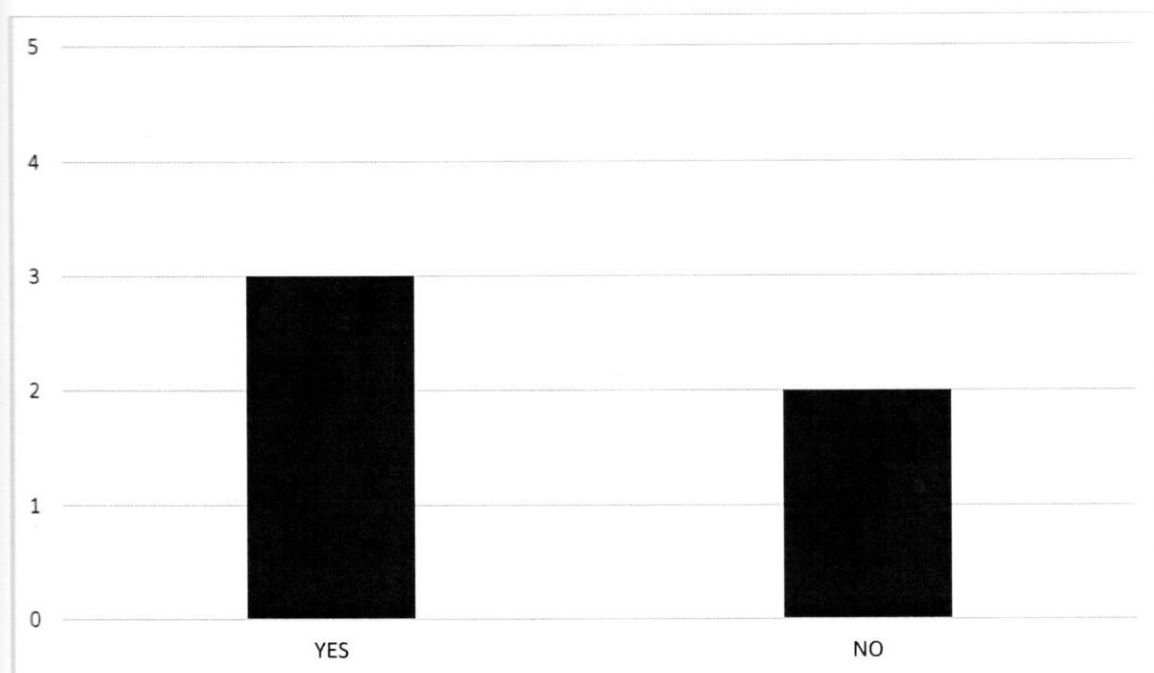
According to Elliot's model (Latorre, 2008) this step of data analysis would be part of the recognition of the problem. The reports that possess qualitative characteristics should offer a response to the problem and support the strategies used to address it, as well as the data that was collected, analyzed and interpreted by the researcher (Munhall & Chenail, McNiff & Whitehead) quoted by Sampieri (2010).

For the current investigation data is analyzed item by item of the Protocolo Rápido de evaluación pragmática (Gallardo, 2009) taken from (Maite Fernández Urquiza, 2015) answered by the two teachers of the private school, who have students with intellectual disability in their classes. The analysis of the instrument is being accompanied with details from the other 2 instruments: the guide list and the diary of the investigator.

ITEM. 1

1. PRODUCTION OF SPEECH ACTS

1.1 The speaker finds the words he is looking for and is able to make use of the grammar of the foreign language to convey meaning.



According to the teacher's perspective there are 3 of the 5 students with intellectual disability who can find the words they need in order communicate something meaningful in the foreign language. Using an instrument for observation (Guide-list) it was seen that 3 of the 5 students are trying to communicate using simple phrases in English with very basic structures.

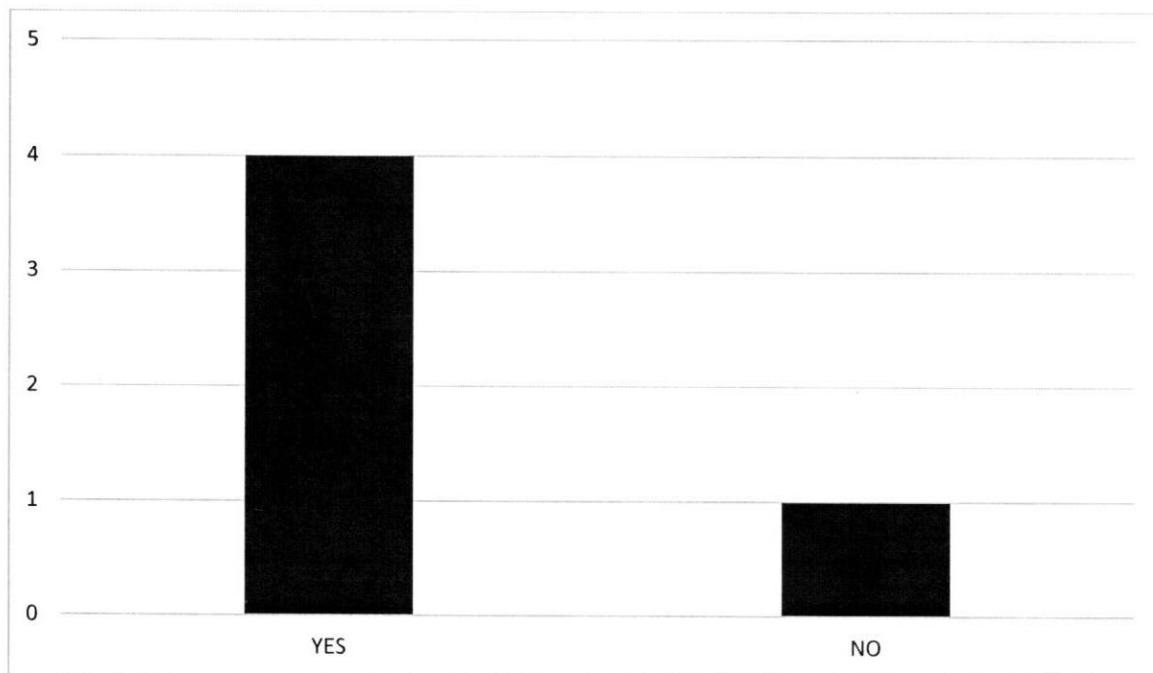
This information corresponds to 1 aspect observed in the guide list, language pragmatics in use, which is described in other 3 sub-aspects: a) Students are using the second language spontaneously, students are using simple English classroom phrases or questions, such as: *May I go to the bathroom?* or *I'm done*, and c) students understand how to apply grammar and vocabulary in a communicative activity. Two of the students were observed to frequently or occasionally respond positively to the first 2 sub-aspects and it was observed that two of them occasionally understand how to apply grammar and vocabulary in a communicative activity (Sub-aspect c).

The diary of the investigator also provides an example of just one student from intermediate English in second grade, who was asked some questions: *What are you doing? Are you ready?* And he answered with short English phrases, some of them grammatically incorrect but he could use some vocabulary in order to construct simple phrases in English.

ITEM # 2

2. Compensatory behavior

2.1 The speaker uses verbal strategies that allow him to get extra time for the construction of his verbal emissions.

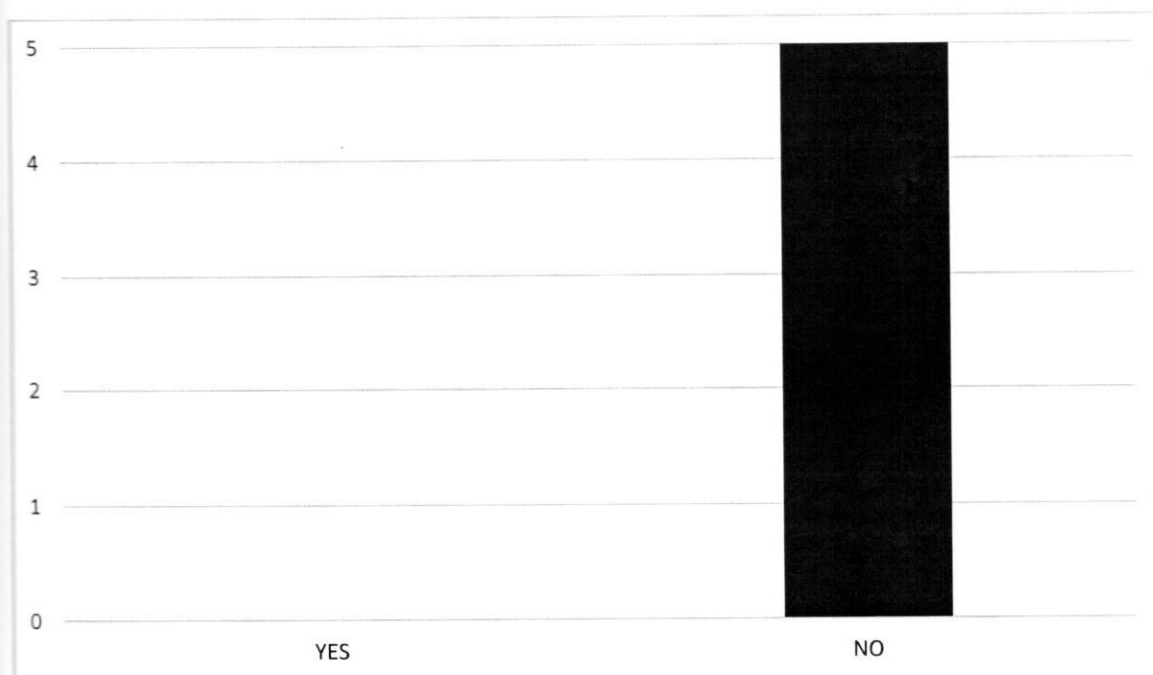


According to the teacher's perspective 4 of the 5 students are able to use verbal strategies that allow him to get extra time for the construction of their verbal emissions. During the five days of observation this specific behavior was not observed in none of the 5 students with intellectual disability.

ITEM # 3

2. Compensatory behavior

2.2 The students use gestures that substitute, complete or regulate the verbal production.



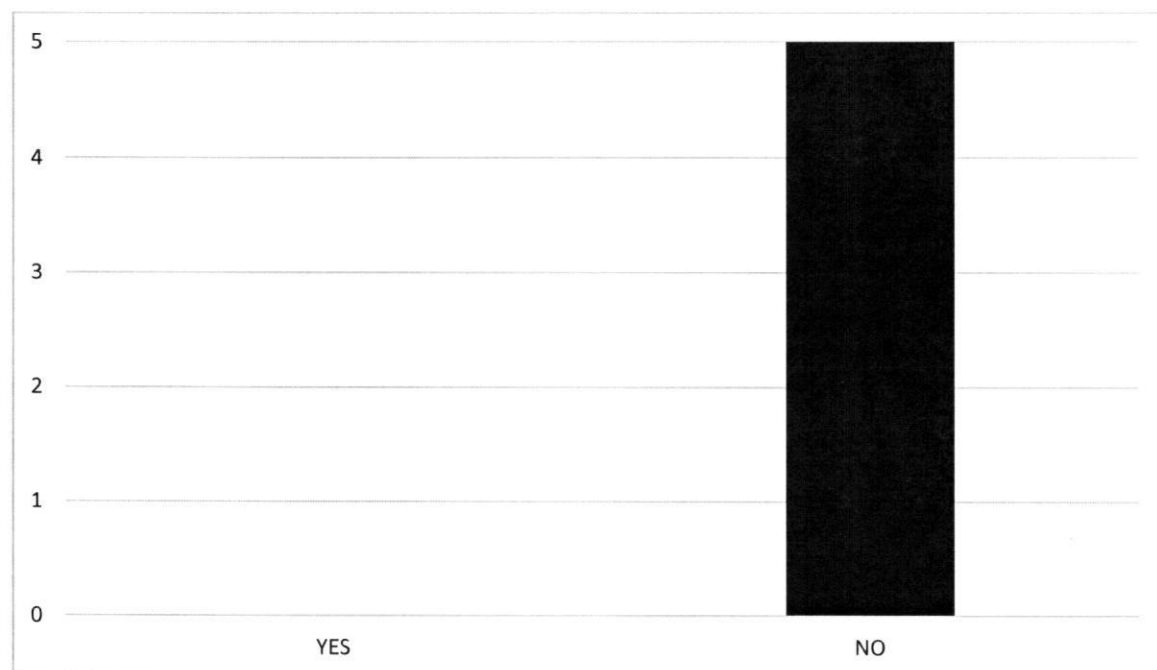
For this item teachers answered that none of the 5 students are using gestures to complete or substitute the oral production. Using another instrument, that is the guide list, there is a sub-aspect of the instrument that says: Students are expressing opinions, feelings and ideas (in their first or second language) in a different way that their classmates do. 4 of the 5 students were observed occasionally showing feelings, ideas or things that they do not express in a verbal mode.

For example, using the diary of the investigator it was observed that once one of the students was excited and he was smiling, dancing and making different sounds. A different student shows when he is angry or sad with his facial gestures, and the other two that were observed showed surprise when the teacher showed something in the computer, so it can be concluded that they are not using gestures in order to complement their verbal communication, but they are using them to substitute verbal communication.

ITEM # 4

3. Rectification and meta-pragmatic awareness

3.1 The speaker tries to correct his own sentence when they result problematic.

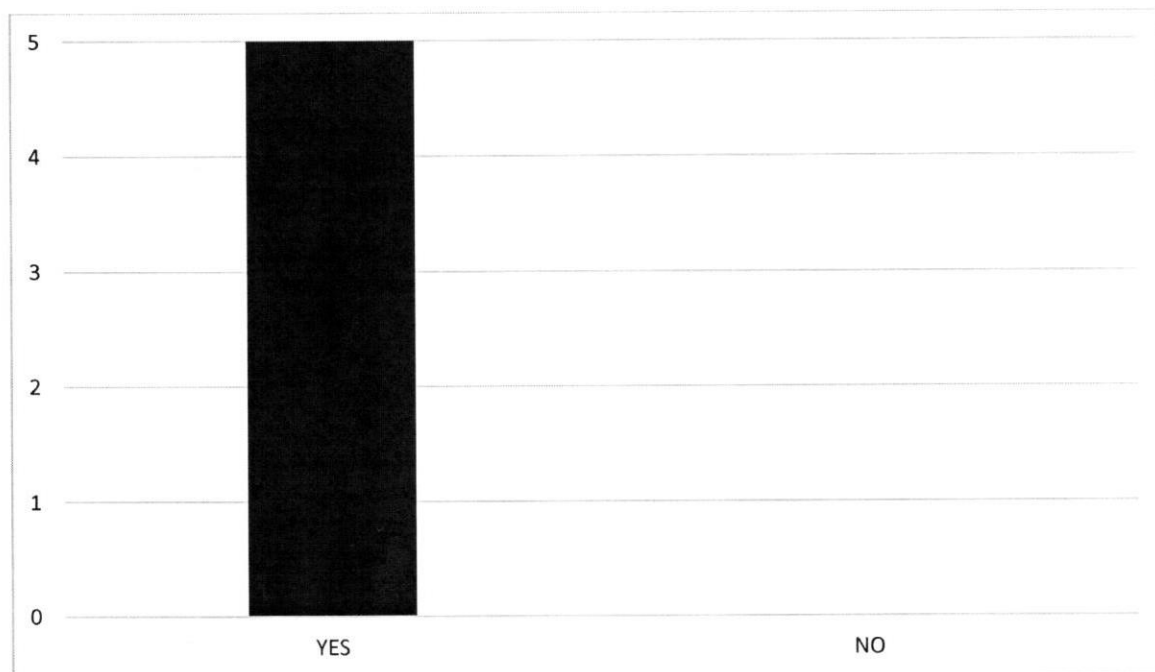


According to the teacher's answers none of the 5 students try to correct their own sentences when they make a mistake or have communication problems with their own sentences.

ITEM #5

4. Principle of cooperation: generalized and particularized implicatures.

4.1 The information he provides is truthful.

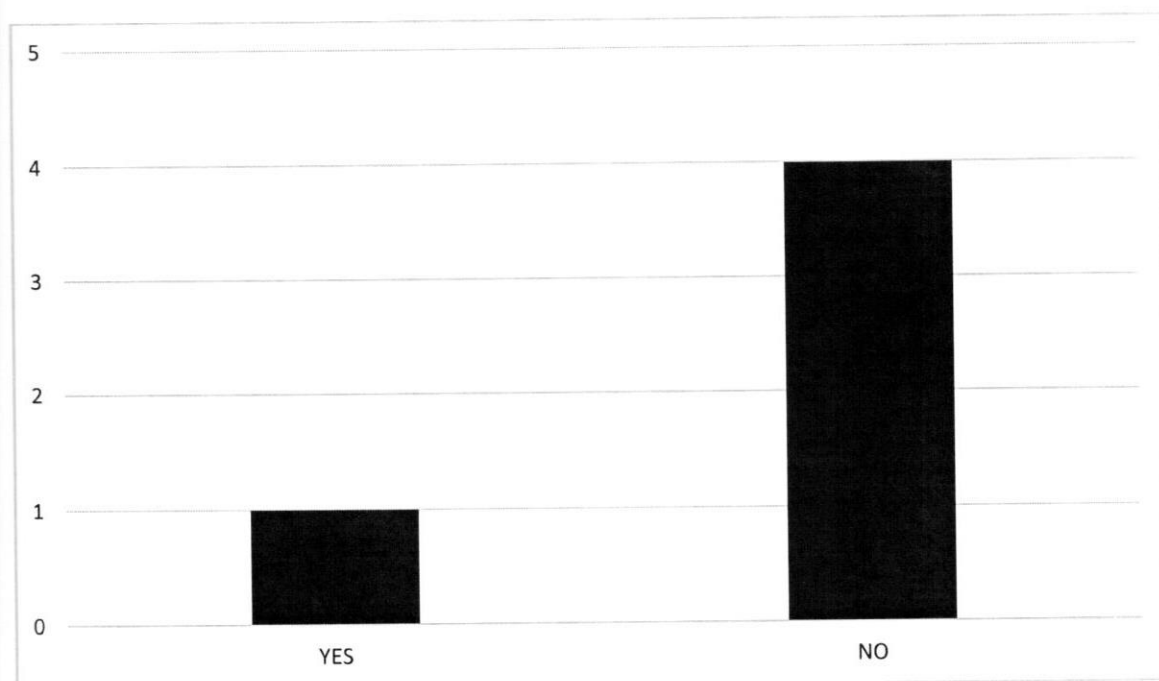


According to the teachers' perspective all 5 students provide information that is truthful. During the time for observation this aspect was not taken into account, but it was never observed that the students were providing untruthful information to the teachers or to others.

ITEM # 6

4. Principle of cooperation: generalized and particularized implicatures.

4.2 The information is provided in a clear, orderly and unambiguous way.



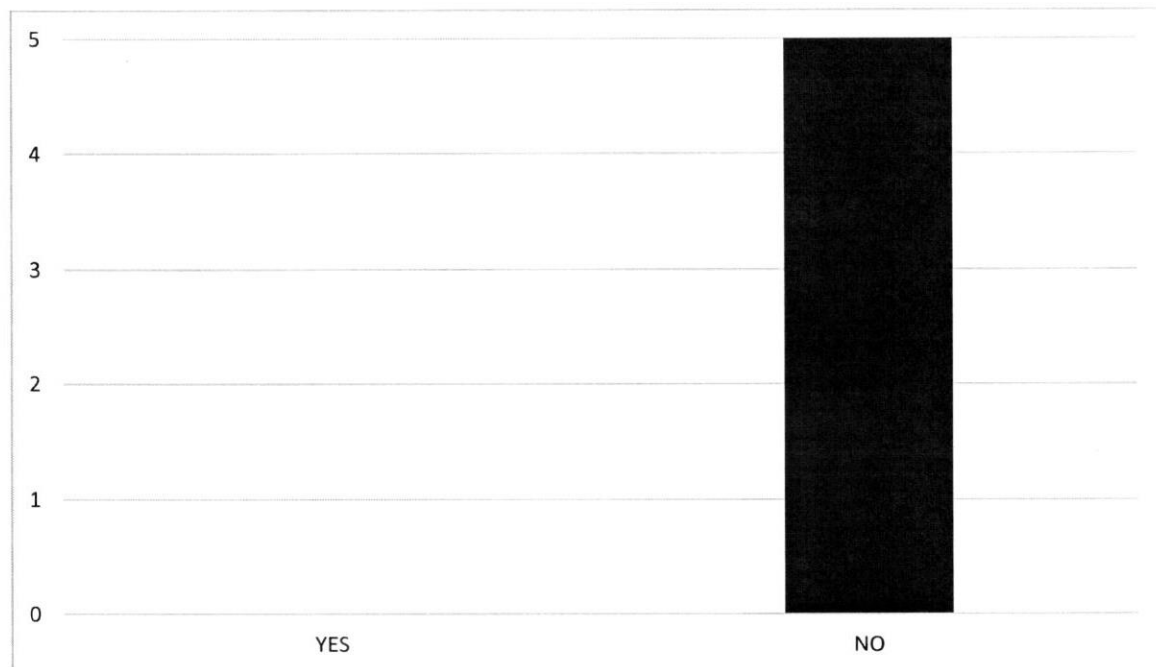
According to the teachers' answers 4 of the 5 students have difficulties in providing clear, ordered and unambiguous information in the foreign language. Just one of them, according to one of the teachers is able to do so but with help, as evidence this teacher wrote: *He gives his opinion but needs some help to complete the sentences.* By applying the guide-list for observation the first aspect to be observed: Language pragmatics in use with its sub-aspect: c) students understand how to apply grammar and vocabulary in a communicative activity; it was observed that it was very hard for them to use the vocabulary they know in context.

Students with intellectual disability had problems while they were asked to explain something in English or y trying to use the vocabulary the learned in a certain unit. It was observer that they could not express in a clear way. Just one of the students was able to do so, but he was using very simple English structures to communicate. Carr et al (2016) affirm that people with intellectual disability have problems in discourse impairment, such as it was observed in the diary and said by the teachers.

ITEM # 7

4. Principle of cooperation: generalized and particularized implicatures.

4.3 Their interventions are related to the topic of conversation.



According to the teachers' perspective none of the students can participate in a conversation in the foreign language and be able to be in it with interventions related to the topic of conversation. By using one of the instruments for observation, the guide-list, it was observed that students are not talking too much to their classmates or to the teacher, they are not participating in the classes, but they answer and ask questions. It was observed that they frequently did not understand the topic of the class or the topic of a conversation and they asked.

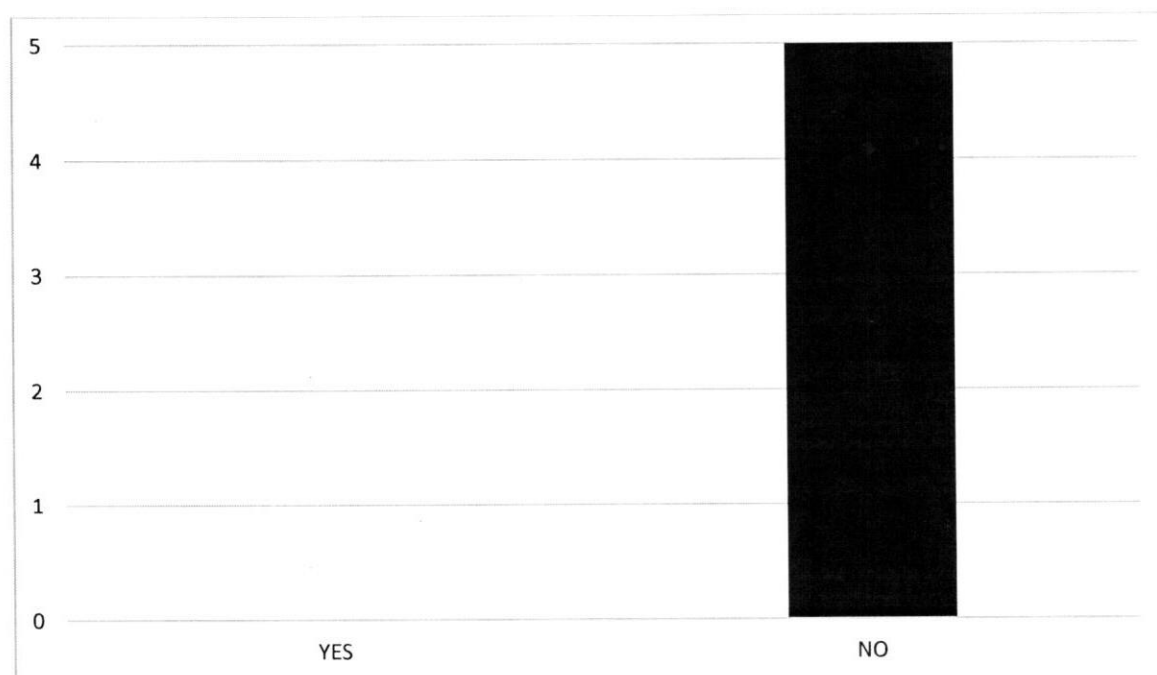
In addition, there is a register in the diary of the investigator of one day when there were not formal classes, but a special activity in the school, the teacher was just having a relaxed conversation with her students, everybody was talking except these two girls with intellectual disability, but they were sometimes asking (in Spanish, their native language) things like *¿Maestra por qué movimos nuestras bancas?*, *¿Maestra, qué vamos a hacer hoy?* While the other students were just having a relaxed time talking about different things with the teacher.

This fact is mentioned by Carr et al (2016) when they say that these people have deficits in adaptive functioning that result in failure to meet developmental and sociocultural standards for personal independence and social responsibility. Without support, the adaptive deficit limit functioning in one or more activities of daily life, such as communication, social participation, and independent living across multiple environments such as home, schools, work and community.

ITEM # 8

5. Conventional implicit: lexicalized inferences

5.1 Understands and/or correctly used lexicalized expressions or idioms.

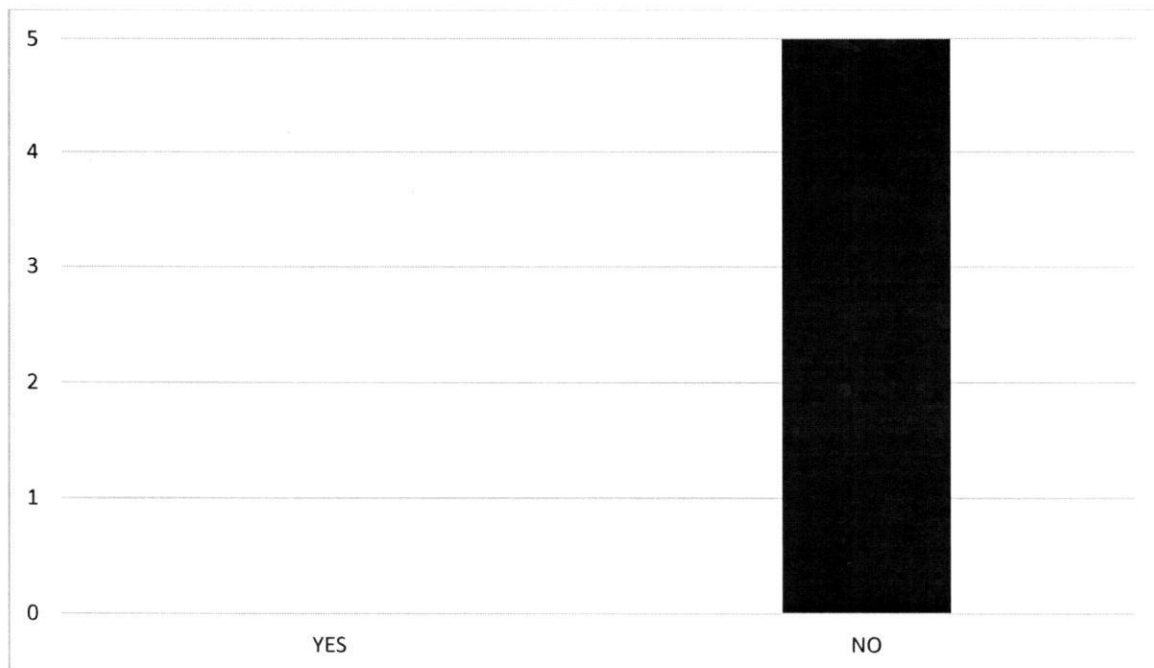


According to the teachers' observations of their own classmates none of the 5 students understand or use lexicalized expressions or idioms. This aspect was not taken into account while observing the students, but it was never observed that one of them was using lexicalized phrases or any type of idioms. The same fact mentioned in the last item by Carr et al (2016) fits perfectly with this one: students have difficulties to meet socio-cultural standards that are reflected in their own communication.

ITEM # 9

6. Textual superstructures

6.1 When narrating does not omit relevant events, presents the characters appropriately, places their actions temporally, and introduces the information in the logical and chronological order in the development of the events.

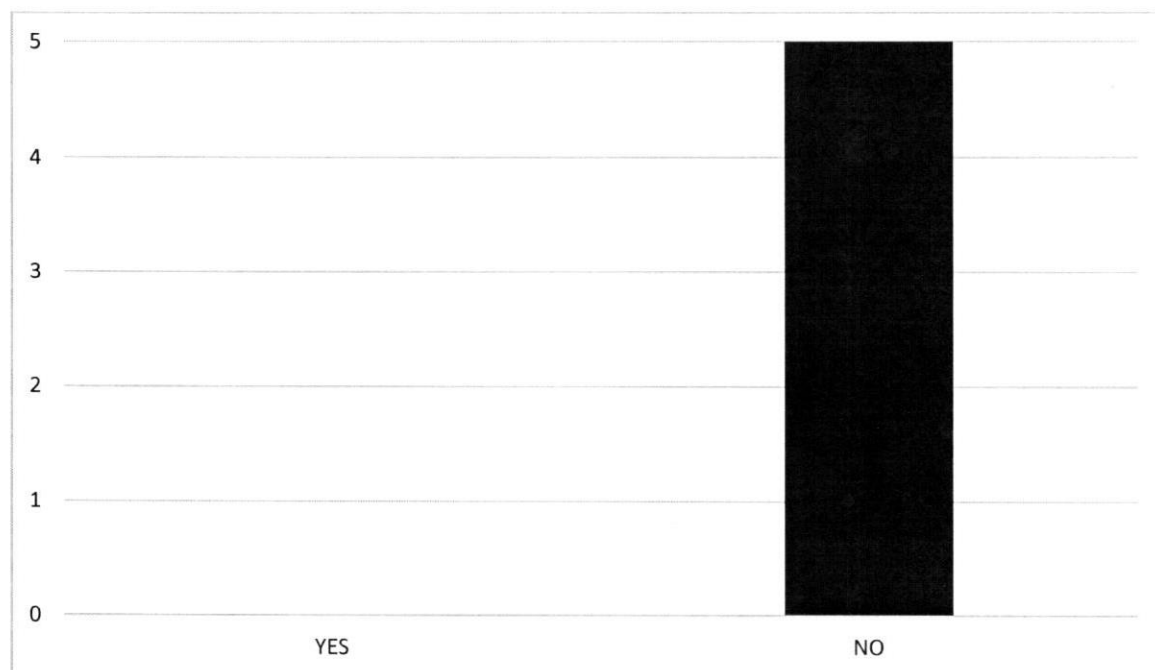


Once more the teachers answered that none of the 5 students' narration is chronologically and logically correct. During the 5 days of observation it was not possible to observe this aspect about narration, but according to Carr et al (2016) this is perfectly normal because students have difficulties with discourse, as he mentioned one of the characteristics of their communication is impairment in discourse.

ITEM # 10

7. Lexical understanding

7.1 The speaker can understand a wide range of vocabulary



Once again, teachers answered that none of the students have a wide range of vocabulary in the foreign language they are studying. This fact could be observed by using the guide-list. The second aspect of the guide-list is: Second language acquisition problems, with 3 of the 4 sub aspects: a) Students seem to understand while the teachers is talking like the other do, b) Students are working and following the teachers' instructions in the class and d) Students are working in the class. It could be observed that students have not a wide range of vocabulary that allow them to understand and use the foreign language in their classrooms.

By using the diary of the investigator, it was observed that some of the students could partially understand vocabulary and phrases that they have memorized, such as: *Take out your book, Open your book on page ____* or questions such as: *What is your favorite ____? Do you like ____?* But there were also other students could not even understand basic questions such as: *What is your name?* or *How are you?*

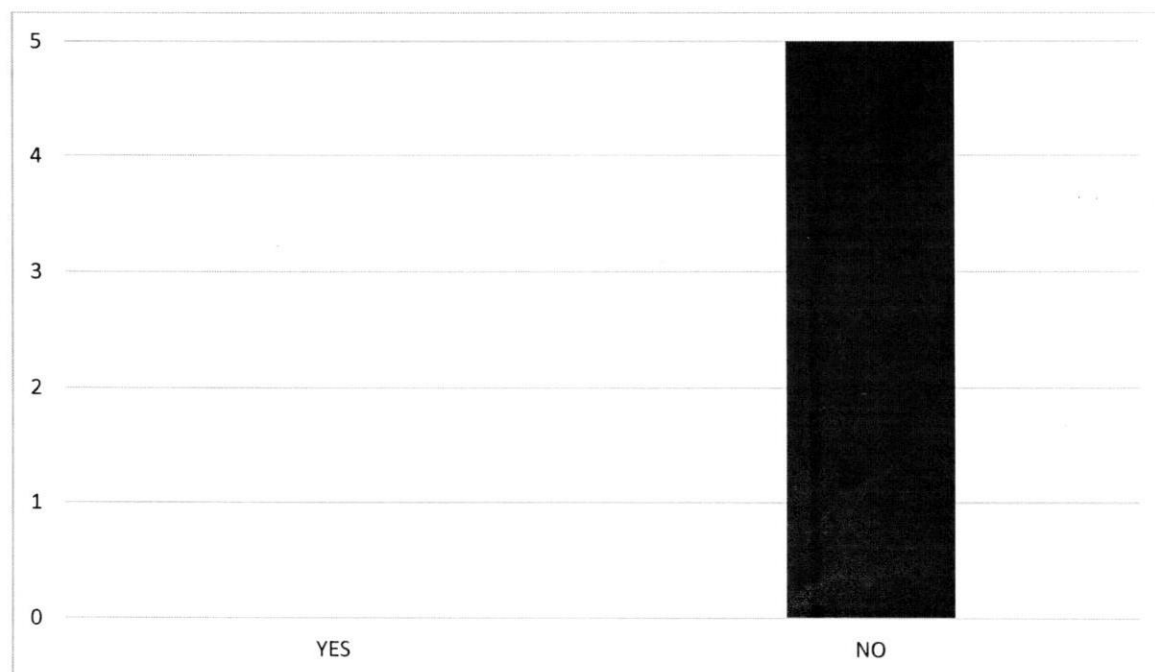
Carr et al (2016) provide a description of the language disorder that can be presented on students with intellectual disability: Persistent difficulties in the acquisition and use of language across modalities (spoken, written, sign language, or other) due to deficits in comprehension or production that include: reduced vocabulary (word knowledge and use)

Something interesting that is mentioned in the diary of the investigator is that during one unit in second grade, basic English, the students were learning Wh-Questions. They memorized the meaning of each isolated question, for example: *What?* means ¿*Qué?* in Spanish, *Why?* means ¿*Por qué?* but they could not use any of these questions in context. They could not understand the meaning of a question based on Wh-questions even when they knew the meaning of each Wh-isolated question.

ITEM # 11

8. Morphology and word formation.

8.1 The speaker construction of the words is complete, using properly noun completions, adjectives and verbs, respecting the concordances of time, gender or number, as well as articles.



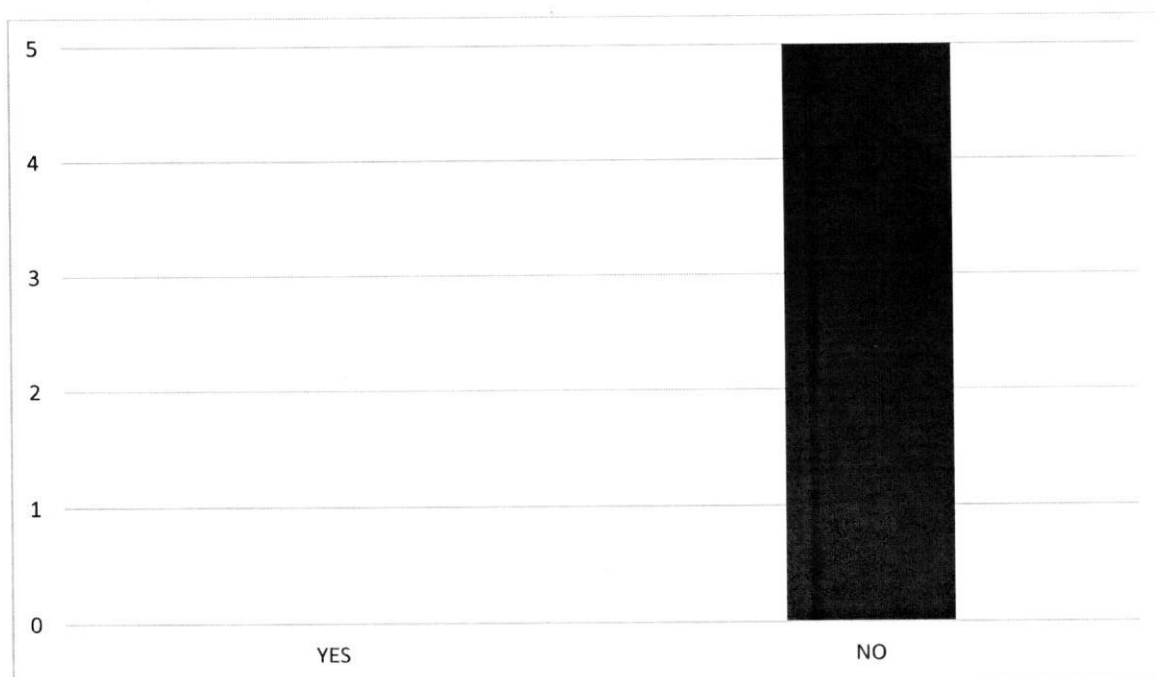
According to the teachers' perspective none of the students' construction of the words is complete. During the 5 days of observation this fact was clearly observed, students could use words correctly just in memorized phrases, such as: *My favorite color is pink, My name is _____, My favorite food is _____*, etc. They did not use any type of adjective to describe something spontaneously, just if the teacher asked them directed questions like: *What color is it?, Is it big?*, etc.

About the time it is interesting to say that one of the sub-aspects of aspect 1 in the guide-list: d) Students understand the appropriate context and time to use those basic phrases and questions (referring to commonly classroom phrases, such as *May I go to the bathroom? May I get a drink?*) shows that two of the students are not understanding how and when to use these phrases, other two are frequently using them correctly and one of them could use them in the appropriate time most of the time during the observation.

ITEM # 12

9. Syntax and grammatical construction

9.1 His construction of phrases and sentences is conventional and uses complete structure statements, both in sentences (subject+predicate) as in minor constituents.



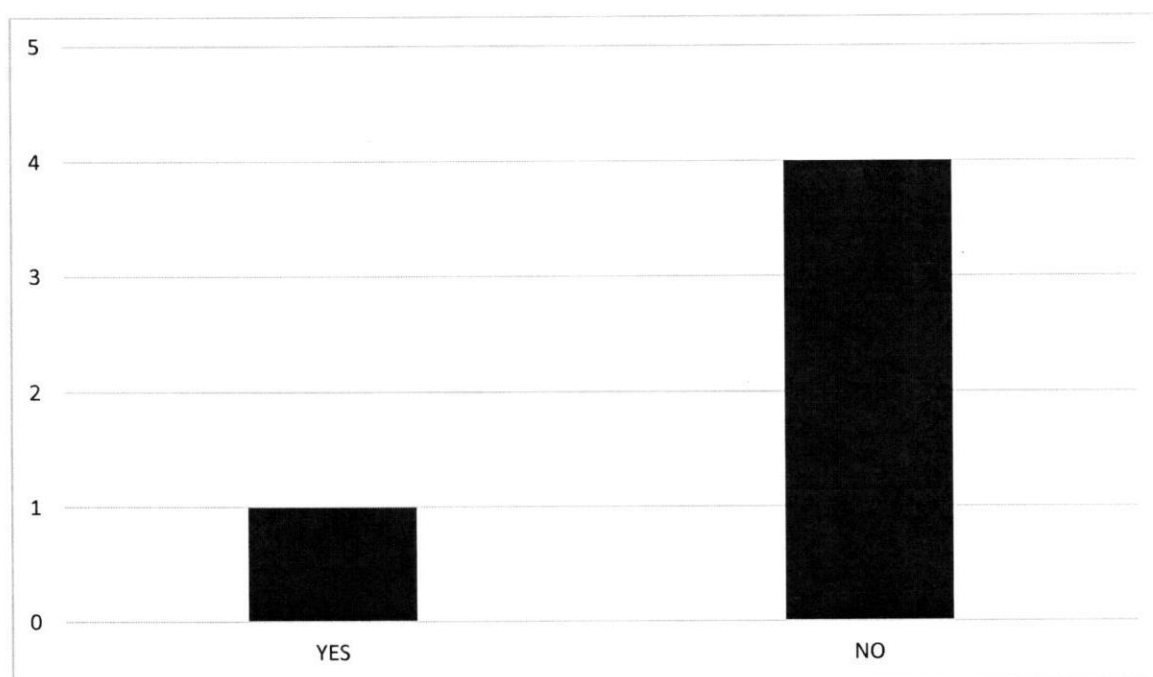
According to the teachers' perspective none of the students are able to construct conventional sentences and use complete structure statements. According to Carr et al (2016) this results are normal due to students with intellectual disability have problems with limited sentence structure. The results of this aspect of language pragmatics provided by Gallardo (2009) can be reinforced by the observations of the guide list and the diary of the investigator. As it was mentioned before, students have problems adding context to the vocabulary. It was observed that it was not really complicated for them to get isolated new vocabulary, but it was hard for them to convey that vocabulary with other words to construct sentences.

They did not show any problems while using questions or sentences they have memorized before, they do not have to construct those sentences or structures because they already know them by memory, for example: In one of the classes the teacher was asking to one of the girls with intellectual disability different questions and she could just answered those who she memorized, like *What is your favorite color?* "*My favorite color is pink*", *What is your name?* "*My name is _____*", *How are you?* "*I am fine, thank you*". The teacher said that she has memorized those words before.

ITEM # 13

10. Conversational participation rate

10.1 The speaker's level of verbal participation in a conversation is proportional to that of the other participants.



According to the teachers' perspective 4 of the students' verbal participation in a conversations is not proportional to the other participants. This could be easily observed and is registered in the diary of the investigator, these students were quiet most of the time in their classrooms while everybody else was talking. In addition, there was a sub-aspect of the aspect 3 in the guide list: a) Students are talking during the class (using second or first language) and it was observed that just one of them was talking in the classroom but using his first language, Spanish.

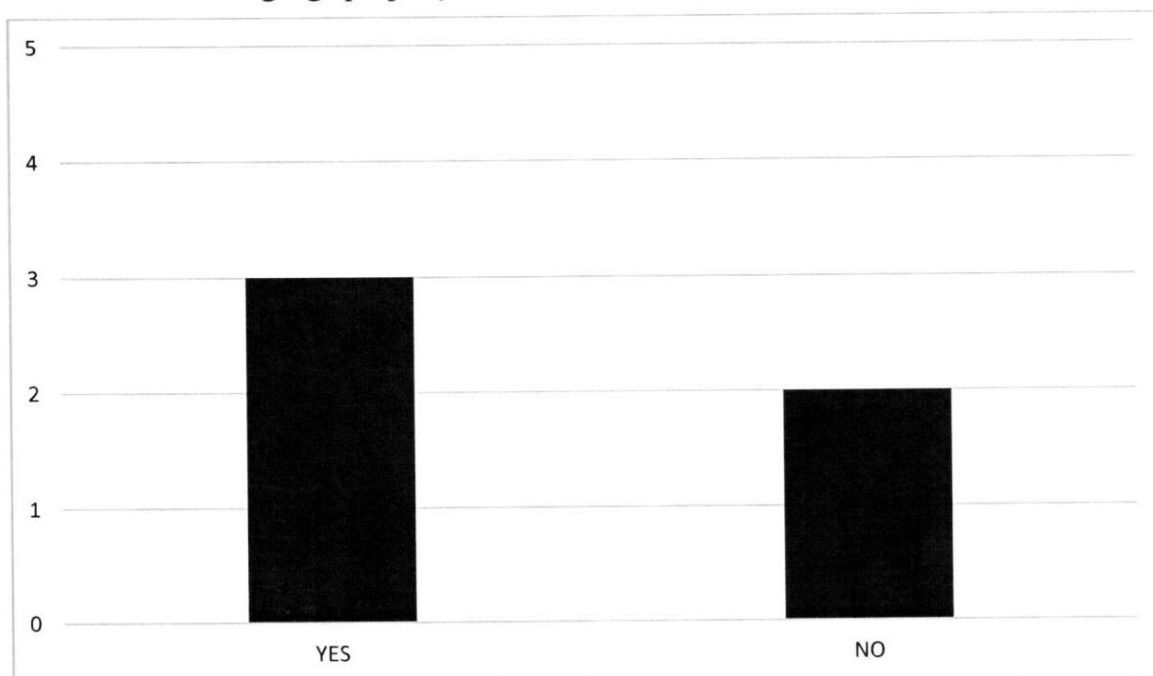
This student is the same student that one of the teachers considers that his level of verbal participation in a conversation is proportional to that of the other participants, he wrote that he likes to talk to his friends and say his opinion about a topic. This student was observed to be the most social student, trying to talk to his classmates, but the other 4 had too many difficulties in doing so.

According to Carr et al (2016) Language abilities are substantially and quantifiably below those expected for age, resulting in functional limitations in effective communication, social participation, academic achievement, or occupational performance, individually or in any combination.

ITEM # 14

11. Natural gesture

11.1 His use of gestures, facial expressions and non-verbal communication complements and matches language properly, but does not replace it.



According to the teacher's perspective 3 of the 5 students are able to use gestures, facial expressions and non-verbal communication that complements and matches language properly, but does not replace it. It seems to be a contradiction with item 2.2 which says: The speaker uses gestures that substitute, complete or regulate the verbal production, where teachers said that none of the students are able to do so. Teachers did not provide any

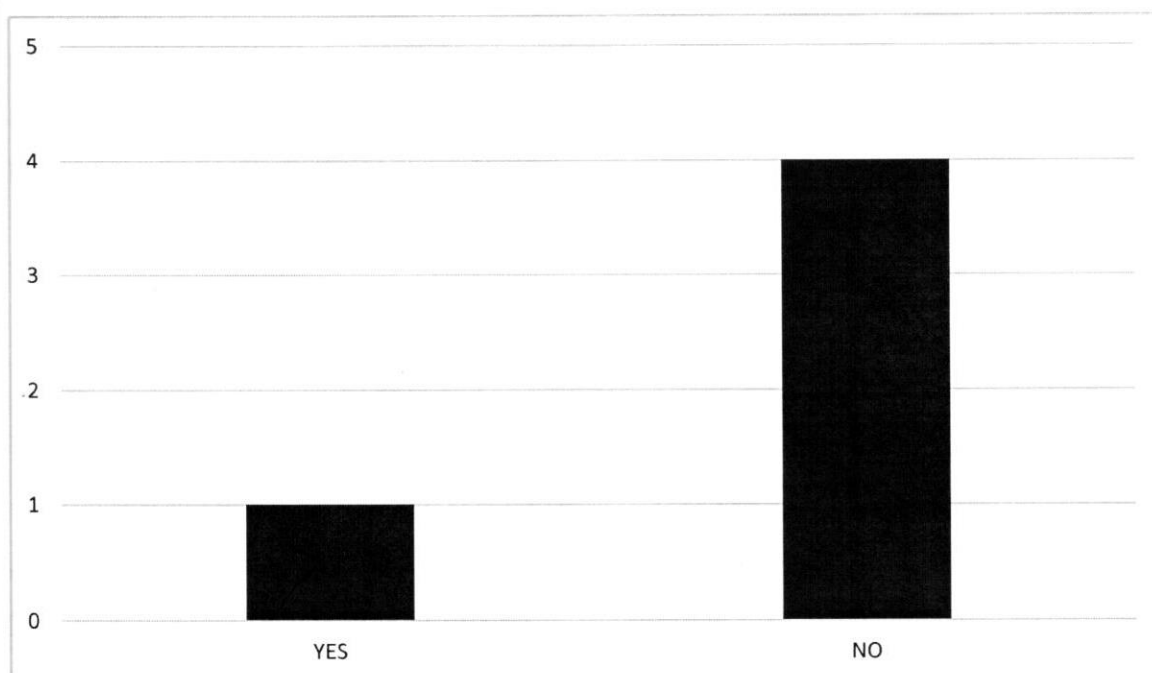
evidence for those who (according to the teachers) are using gestures non-verbal communication that complements and matches language properly.

As it was mentioned before, students were observed using facial expression, gestures and non-verbal communication, but as a substitute of spoken language. An example that was mentioned before is shown in the diary of the investigator when one of the students was excited, smiling, dancing and making different sounds. A different student shows when he is angry or sad with his facial gestures, and the other two that were observed showed surprise when the teacher showed something in the computer, but they never communicate with words what they were communicating with his gestures, so it was concluded that they are not using gestures in order to complement their verbal communication, but they are using them to substitute verbal communication.

ITEM # 15

12. Communicative use of sight

12.1 Uses the sight communicatively, to confirm listening and understanding, to give in or ask for the turn.



According to the teachers just 1 of the 5 students use the sight communicatively, to confirm listening, to give in or ask for the turn. This fact could be easily observed by using the diary of the investigator. One of the students was more active and social than the other and he was not afraid of making eye contact while talking. His teacher says that when he asks him a question his sight reflects that he is looking for the answer by looking around, so just one of the 5 students with intellectual disability uses the sight communicatively.

3.6 Conclusions of data analysis

After analyzing the results provided by the applied instruments it can be said that there are some things that were confirmed about the problems of students with intellectual disability on language pragmatics. By applying three different instruments with two different perspectives (teachers' perspectives and the investigator's perspective) it was possible to collect enough data to confirm the existence of a problem.

First of all, some of the things that were confirmed by the teachers and during the observation are some facts mentioned by Carr et al (2016) and Harris (2010). Certainly, as

mentioned by Harris (2010) it was clearly observed that students have problems that affect their learning, specifically their language learning, problems of language disorder. Carr et al (2016) provide more details saying that they present difficulties in the acquisition and use of language across modalities (spoken, written, sign language, or other) due to deficits in comprehension or production that include the following:

- a) Reduced vocabulary (word knowledge and use)
- b) Limited sentence structured.
- c) Impairment in discourse.

In addition, they present some behavioral and social adaptation problems that were mentioned in the diary of the investigator and that are also mentioned by Carr et al (2016): “Deficits in adaptive functioning that result in failure to meet developmental and sociocultural standards for personal independence and social responsibility. Without support, the adaptive deficit limit functioning in one or more activities of daily life, such as communication, social participation, and independent living across multiple environments such as home, schools, work and community.” (p.5)

The behavioral problems are closely connected to the language problems due to language and behavior are complementary concepts, people express what they are, according to social rules, culture, stereotypes, ideologies, etc. Children with intellectual disability cannot fulfilled the socio-cultural communicative demands because of the lack of comprehension of the rules of the society where they are living.

In another hand, it was observed and mentioned by the teachers that students can memorize complete phrases and vocabulary but in an isolated way, that means that they are able to understand the meaning of a word without understanding how to use it during a conversation or they can memorize a question such as *What is your favorite color?* And memorize the answer *My favorite color is ____*. Therefore the problem is not how many words students can memorize, but how to use those words in order to speak English, and that is completely related to language pragmatics.

4. DIDACTIC PROPOSAL

4.1 Proposal's design

In this part the foundations and activities for the proposal are explained. In addition, the development of the activities are explained including the activities of Role-plays.

Name of the research	Teaching children with intellectual disability to understand and to use English through pragmatics.
Proposal's name	Speech acts in action
Education level	Secondary school (Special education: intellectual disability).
Area	Language pragmatics in use in the foreign language.

Proposal's presentation	<p>According to Cullen (2012) this proposal is designed with the criteria of a learner-centered curriculum due to the activities presented here are centered on the individuals' specific necessities and processes of learning. These activities are presented as roleplays based on speech acts that present situations of the real life that can develop the students' acquisition of the foreign language.</p> <p>According to Carr et al (2016) and the results of the instruments applied in the chapter of Data Collection it was confirmed what Carr et al (2016) say about some problems that students with intellectual disability face: Deficits in adaptive functioning that result in failure to meet developmental and sociocultural standards for personal independence and social responsibility. Without support, the adaptive deficit limit functioning in one or more activities of daily life, such as communication, social participation, and independent living across multiple environments such as home, schools, work and community.</p> <p>Due to these results roleplays based on speech acts are proposed as activities in order to develop the pragmatic use of the foreign language of these students. Roleplays, according to the communicative approach provide contexts of the real life where language can be perfectly contextualized.</p> <p>Because of the limits of time of the current project it is not possible to apply an exhaustive list of role plays that cover every single speech act or situation that a person face, but the activities centered on role plays have been selected according to a list of speech acts provided by the Centered for Advanced Research of Language Acquisition from the University of Minnesota:</p>
-------------------------	--

	<p>“This site provides a collection of descriptions of speech acts as revealed through empirical research. The material is designed to help language teachers and advanced learners to be more aware of the sociocultural use of the language they are teaching or learning.”</p> <p>The speech acts used in these activities are:</p> <p>Apologies</p> <p>Introductions</p> <p>Greetings</p> <p>Compliments/Responses</p> <p>Invitations</p> <p>Refusals</p> <p>Requests</p> <p>Thanks</p> <p>It is expected that this contextualization of the language help students with intellectual disability to comprehend better how to use language and not just to memorize it.</p>
Objectives	<p>- General objective</p> <p>To provide activities to students with intellectual disabilities to develop the pragmatic understanding and use of the foreign language.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To select vocabulary and specific grammar structures according to two specific context areas. b) To develop roleplays based on specific speech acts and situations that help students to use vocabulary and grammar in the appropriate ways and contexts.
Content	<p>Characteristics: The content presented is primarily based on language pragmatics following the communicative approach. In order to present activities that develop the language pragmatics in the students with intellectual</p>

disability different speech acts have been selected as a base for role plays that are place in two different contexts:

1. School
2. Home

These two contexts have been selected because they are the principal areas where these students are involved. Just two contexts have been selected because of the lack of time to apply the activities.

Different situations are presented in these two areas (home and school) as role plays where the use of speech acts is involved.

CONTENT OF THE CLASSES

TOPIC	AREA	SPEECH ACT (S)
Introducing myself to new friends	School	Introduction and greetings.
Asking for help at school	School	Request and thanks.
Chatter at the dinner table	Home	Request, refusals, thanks, complaints.
Arriving and leaving	Home/School	Greetings
Failing at something	Home/School	Apologies

Activities

According to the communicative approach, role plays are the principal basis for the activities developed in this proposal.

Lesson number 1: Introducing myself to new friends.

Activities:

Section 1. After presenting the necessary vocabulary and grammar structures through pictures and videos, they will be used in context by examples provided by the teacher. A similar situation is presented to the students but not identical, they have a conversation with the teacher following the topic.

Section 2. A warm up role play activity where one of the students is the new one in the school and has to introduce himself to the whole class. After doing that, the class is divided in groups where they take turns to be the new student who introduce himself to the rest of the classmates,

both the new student and the classmates (in their roles) have to be interacting. (That is what is going to be evaluated).

Lesson no.2 Asking for help at school.

Activities:

Section 1. Some vocabulary and grammar structures from the last class are reviewed because of the same context (school) and some new are introduced.

Section 2. A role play based on a problem at the classroom is presented to the students. By giving them some options to answer they choose how the conversation will be developed.

Section 3. Two different role plays are given for two different groups where common classroom problems are presented. Students will appropriate their roles in order to respond to the presented problems.

Lesson number 3. Chatter at the dinner table.

Activities:

Section 1. New vocabulary is introduced through realia and by setting the scene of the dinner table.

Section 2. A grammar tense is introduced to be the basis of the conversation in the table (past tense). Some examples are presented by the teacher taking the role of mom or dad (asking how their day was) and the students will use past tense to respond to those questions.

Section 3. Students sit around the table and the teacher assigns each one of them a role in the family members (mom, dad, son, brother, etc). The teacher provides in a printed list some examples of questions and answers for each role and the students should select the more appropriate answer to follow the conversation in a correct pragmatical way.

Lesson 4. Arriving and leaving.

Activities.

Section 1.

Basic vocabulary about greetings is introduced by a video.

Section 2. Vocabulary is separated in two basic areas, phrases and words we use to say hello and goodbye at home and at school. These differentiation is explained and then practice with a game.

Section 3. Students practice greetings by role plays adapted to school (when arriving and leaving) and role plays adapted to home (when arriving and leaving) but in both cases the roleplays present different situations, for example, at school: Greeting a teacher in the morning and the difference of greeting a classmate in the morning.

	<p>Lesson 5. Failing at something.</p> <p>Activities:</p> <p>Section 1. Introducing basic vocabulary for apologizing.</p> <p>Section 2. Presenting some examples of failing at home or at school and asking students for possible responses in the different situations.</p> <p>Section 3. Divide the students in two groups. Every student is provided with a context where they failed at something in home or in school. The teacher also provides a printed list for possible answers to the situations they are facing, after deciding the more appropriate responses every group will represent in front of their classmates the situations they were facing and how they chose to answer.</p>
Lesson plan design	<p>Lesson plans are designed and developed for every lesson. (See Annex # 3.)</p>
Criteria for evaluation	<p>The <i>Protocolo Rapido de Evaluacion Pragmática Revisado</i> was applied this time as an instrument for observation in order to evaluate and compare the results after applying the Role-plays with the results of data collection in the last chapter.</p>
Bibliography	<p>Budden, Joana (February 15th, 2018). Role-play. British Council (BBC). Retrieved from: https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/role-play</p> <p>Carr, Alan. 2016. The handbook of intellectual disability and clinical psychology practice. (Digital PDF Version). (2n^d edition). Routledge.</p> <p>Centered for Advanced Research of Language Acquisition from the University of Minnesota. Retrieved from: http://carla.umn.edu/speechacts/descriptions.html</p> <p>Communicative Approach. (February 15th, 2018). Communicative approach. British Council (BBC). Retrieved from: https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/communicative-approach</p>

Cullen R. Harris, M. and Hill, R. (2012). The learner-centered curriculum. Design and implementations. USA: Jossey-Bass.

Maite Fernández Urquiza, F. D. (2015). *Protocolo Rápido de Evaluación Prágmatica Revisado*. Valencia, España: Guada Impresores, S.L.

4.2 Lesson plans

Lesson plan # 1 Title: Friendship

(Introducing myself to new friends)

Stages	Procedure	Time	Anticipated problems	Possible solutions
Objective(s):	The student will be able to introduce himself to others.			
Grammar or vocabulary in context:	-Simple present -Some Wh-questions -Hi (Hello) -My name is... -What is your name? -I am__ old. -How old are you -I like___. -What do you like? -I don't like___.			

Warm up:	<p>Listening and singing!</p> <p>A video called: Do you like___? From: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=frN3nvhIHUk</p> <p>After listening once to the song the teacher ask them to follow the lyrics. After singing the song the teacher shares her/his likes and dislikes (I like... and I don't like...) and starts asking: What do you like (name of a student)...</p>	10 minute s	They may be distracted with the music and not paying attention to the lyrics.	The teacher sings every time so they can focus on the lyrics.
Introduction:	<p>The teacher introduces herself/himself (as an example for the students) using pictures or photos projected by a Power Point presentation</p> <p>Example:</p> <p>First slide contains a picture of her/him saying: Hello, my name is_____.</p> <p>*In order to interact with the students students, she/he can ask to a student "what is your name?" after saying her/his own name (after using the appropriate structure).</p>	7 minute s.	It is very easy for them to get distracted .	Use vivid colors in the presentatio n, pictures, variation of the tone of voice and sound very enthusiasti c.
Activity 1	<p>In a projected slide or written in the board the teacher presents a guideline of phrases about how to introduce yourself to new friends:</p> <p>Example:</p> <p>Hello,my name is____</p> <p>I am ____ old</p>	20 minute s.	The explanati on in the foreign language can be	Use their mother tongue for the part of the

	<p>Etc.</p> <p>The teacher explains that this is useful information that we can provide when we first meet new friends in school or in the park, church or different informal contexts.</p> <p>Students one by one start practicing.</p>		<p>very for them to understand.</p>	<p>explanation.</p>
Activity 2	<p>In a projected slide or written in the board the teacher presents a guideline of Wh-questions that can be asked when someone first meets a new friend.</p> <p>Example:</p> <p>Hello, What is your name?</p> <p>How old are you?</p> <p>What do you like?</p> <p>The teacher explains how they can interact with their new friends by asking and answering these questions.</p> <p>Students start practicing with the teacher's help.</p>	15 minutes.	<p>The explanation in the foreign language can be very for them to understand.</p>	<p>Use their mother tongue for the part of the explanation.</p>
Role-play	<p>The teacher explains the context of the role-play. One of the students comes to the front pretending he/she is a new student in the class, the teacher explains that he/she can use the learnt phrases to introduce himself and encourage the rest of the class to use the Wh-questions to know more about this new classmate.</p>	20 minutes.	<p>They may be confused at the time of practicing without the</p>	<p>Being very clear with the previous practice and with the instruction</p>

	This time they have to follow the activity without the teacher's help.		teacher's help.	s for the Role-play.
--	--	--	-----------------	----------------------

Lesson plan # 2 Title: You need each other (Asking for help at school)				
Stages	Procedure	Time	Anticipated problems	Possible solution
Objective(s):	Students will be able to use basic grammar and vocabulary points in order to have better communication with others in school.			
Grammar or vocabulary in context:	May Can Could Thank you You are welcome			
Warm up:	Review of the song "Do you like?"	5 minutes		
Introduction:	The teacher will put sentences on the board in order to illustrate request and thanks. She/He also explains the importance of asking for help when we cannot solve something by ourselves and the importance	20 minutes	The explanation in the foreign language can be very for them to understand.	Use their mother tongue for the part of the explanation.

	of giving thanks.			
Activity 1	A Warm-up role play based on a problem at the classroom is presented to the students. By giving them some options to answer, they choose how the conversation will be developed.	10 minutes	Distraction and/or confusion	Being clear and repetitive. Asking to participate to the distracted students.
Role-play	Two different role plays are given for two different groups where common classroom problems are presented. Students will appropriate their roles in order to respond to the presented problems.	20 minutes	They may be confused at the time of practicing without the teacher's help.	Being very clear with the previous practice and with the instructions for the Role-play.

Lesson plan # 3 Title: A delicious chatter (Chatter at the dinner table)				
Stages	Procedure	Time	Anticipated problems	Possible solutions
Objective(s):	The students will be able to understand better the family roles			

	and to describe how their day was.			
Grammar or vocabulary in context:	Simple past. What did you do today? How was your day? How is everything going? Fine, thanks. Cool! Good, thank you. Awesome! Pretty bad. Awful!			
Warm up:	Setting the table. (Review of basic vocabulary like salt, different food, plates, etc.)	5 minutes	Students out of control.	Assigning specific tasks to every student.
Introduction:	Students sit around the table and the teacher starts asking in their mother tongue about a normal conversation in their families. (What they normally talk about after school, what they normally ask, etc.) The teacher writes their answers on the board and	20 minutes	Students out of control when sharing their ideas in their mother tongue.	Assigning turns to talk to every student.

	<p>translate them to English.</p> <p>The teacher provides a sheet with the new vocabulary (questions and phrases to talk about at the dinner table).</p> <p>He/She explains each question or phrase.</p>			
Activity 1	<p>The teacher starts asking them to pass things like salt, napkin, etc. (as if they were in a real dinner) and then have them talk to her/him about their day by using the phrases they have in their sheets.</p>	15 minutes	Not understanding what they are supposed to be doing.	Being very clear and repetitive and maybe explain something in Spanish.
Role-play	<p>The teacher assigns each one of them a role in the family members (mom, dad, son, brother, etc).</p> <p>The teacher provides in a printed list some examples of questions and answers for each role and the students should select</p>	15 minutes	Not understanding what they are supposed to be doing.	Being clear by providing instruction and handing out their roles.

	the more appropriate answer to follow the conversation in a correct pragmatical way.			
--	--	--	--	--

Lesson #4 Title: Nice to see you!
(Arriving and leaving)

Stages	Procedure	Time	Anticipated problems	Possible solutions
Objective(s):	The student will be able to use an adequate greeting depending on his/her context.			
Grammar or vocabulary in context:	Hi Hey How are you? Hello Good morning Bye See you later Nice to see you Good night			
Warm up:	Basic vocabulary about greetings is introduced by a video. Video from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tVlcKp3bWH8	7 minute s.	Distraction.	The teacher can stop the video and ask something just to grab the attention of those distracte

				d students.
Introduction:	Vocabulary is separated in two basic areas, phrases and words we use to say hello and goodbye at home and at school. These differentiation is explained and then practice with a game.	15 minutes.	Confusion.	The teacher can use their mother tongue in order to explain something they may not understand easily.
Activity 1	The teacher divides the board in two sections: Greetings at home, greetings at school. Students should place the given greetings in the correct section.	10 minutes.	Students out of control.	The teacher assigns times for every student to participate.
Role-play	Students practice greetings by role plays adapted to school (when arriving and leaving) and role plays adapted to home (when arriving and leaving) but in both cases the roleplays present different situations, for example, at school: Greeting a teacher in the morning and the difference of greeting a classmate in the morning.	20 minutes.	Not understanding what they are supposed to be doing.	Being clear by providing instruction and handing out their roles.

Lesson plan # 5 Title: Another chance! (Failing at something)				
Stages	Procedure	Time	Anticipated problems	Possible solutions

Objective(s):	The student will be able to understand when it is necessary to apologize and how to use an apology appropriately.			
Grammar or vocabulary in context:	I'm sorry. My fault. Can you forgive me? Excuse me.			
Warm up:	A video of apologies.	5 minutes	Distraction.	The teacher can stop the video and ask something just to grab the attention of those distracted students.
Introduction:	Telling a reflexive story about two friends who have to apologize to each other.	7 minutes		
Activity 1	Presenting some examples of failing at home or at school and asking students for possible responses in the different situations.	15 minutes	Difficulties to express.	Students are able to use their mother tongue to share their answers.
Role-play	Divide the students in two groups. Every student is	20 minutes	They may be confused at the	Being very clear with the

	<p>provided with a context where they failed at something in home or in school. The teacher also provides a printed list for possible answers to the situations they are facing, after deciding the more appropriate responses every group will represent in front of their classmates the situations they were facing and how they chose to answer.</p>		<p>time of practicing without the teacher's help.</p>	<p>previous practice and with the instructions for the Role-play.</p>
--	--	--	---	---

4.3 Analysis of proposal's application.

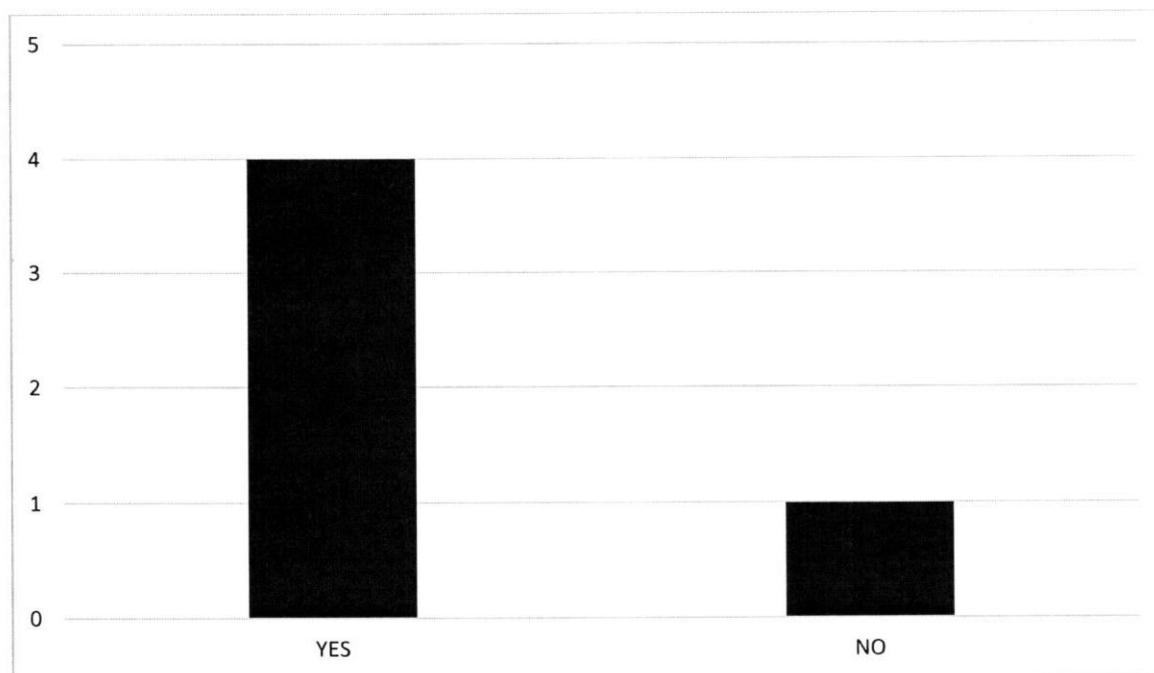
In order to know what the effects of implementing the proposal were and also to recognize if there were some changes or advances in the pragmatical language production of the students, the applied Role-plays are analyzed by the *Protocolo Rápido de Evaluación Pragmática*. According to Elliot's model quoted by Latorre (2008) this section includes two parts of his model: Monitor implementation and effects and recognition taken from cycle number one of his model (the only cycle applied in the current research).

To analyze the effects of implementing the proposal the *Protocolo Rápido de Evaluación Pragmática Revisado* was applied again, but this time as an instrument for observation of the investigator in order to compare the results of data collection with the results after implementing the proposal. In order to analyze the results of implementing the Proposal, every item from the *Protocolo Rápido de Evaluación Pragmática Revisado* was analyzed in a graphic according to the observations of the proposal's application.

ITEM. 1

1. PRODUCTION OF SPEECH ACTS

- 1.1 The speaker finds the words he is looking for and is able to make use of the grammar of the foreign language to convey meaning.



After implementing the activities in the proposal, by providing the students with very clear explanations (sometimes in their mother tongue) and giving them specific examples and specific options to answer 4 of them were able to find the words they were looking for in order to convey meaning in the Role-plays. Just one of them was very confused and did not understand how to use the words provided in order to convey meaning.

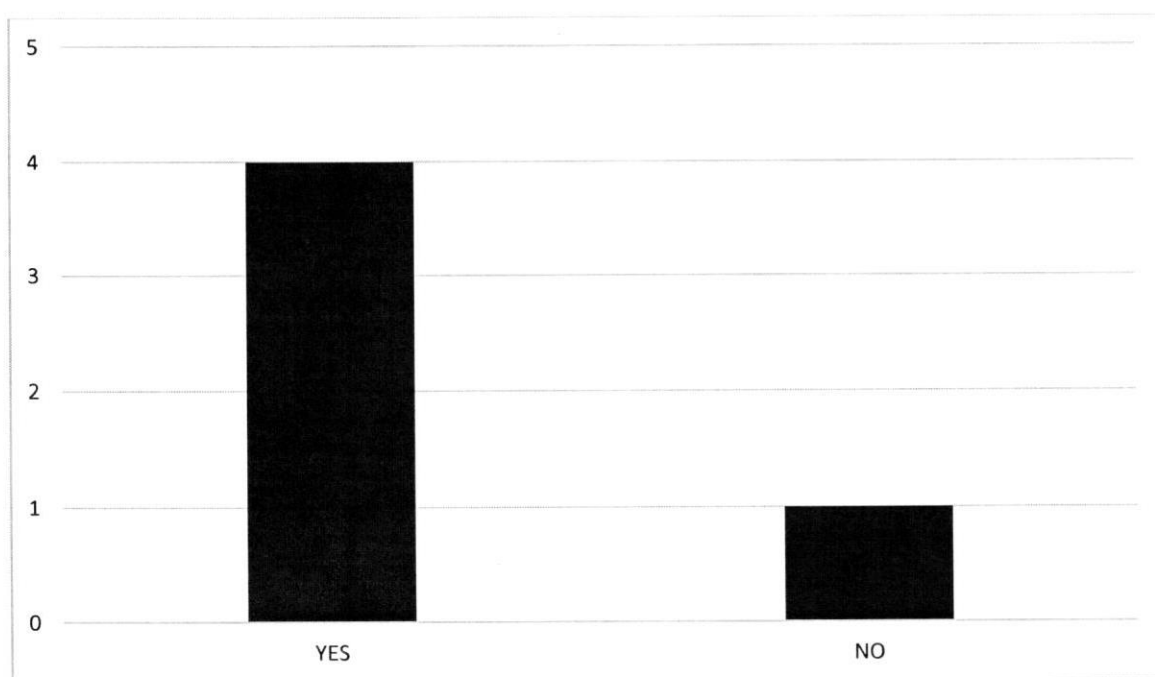
In the first application of the *Protocolo Rápido de Evaluación Pragmática Revisado* the teachers said that 3 of them could find the words they were looking for in order to convey meaning, but it was observed that they used just very simple structures and phrases that they had memorized, such as *May I go to the bathroom?* or *I'm done*. During the application it was seen that when they have the specific options to answer placed in a specific context with the Role-play it was so much easier for them to choose the words they were looking for in order to convey meaning.

An example of this situation was observed during the last class, a printed list of possible answers was given to them and it was easy for four of them to follow the conversation by picking up some phrases and words from the list in order to complete the activity of Role-play. Just one of them was confused and couldn't understand the activity, the teacher tried to help him, but he was choosing inadequate answers for the situation.

ITEM # 2

3. Compensatory behavior

3.1 The speaker uses verbal strategies that allow him to get extra time for the construction of his verbal emissions.

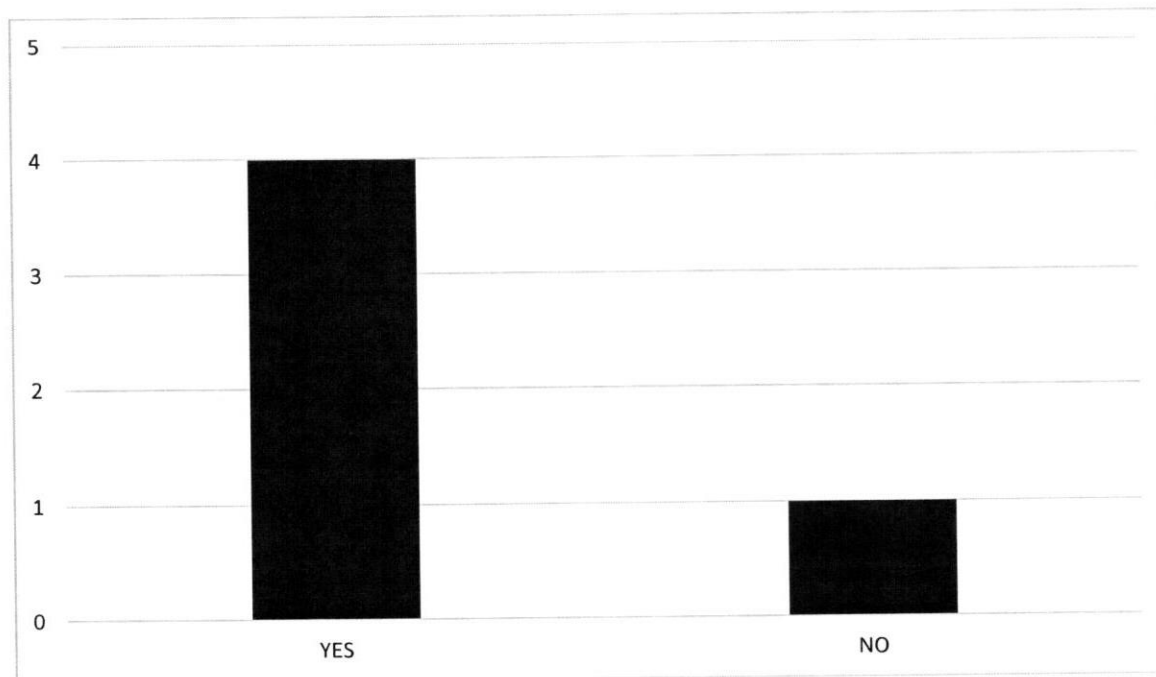


The first time that this instrument was applied this aspect could not be observed during the time of observation in the classroom, but teachers responded that 4 of the 5 students used verbal strategies as a tool to get extra time for the construction of their verbal emissions. This time the aspect could be observed, and the results provided by the teachers did not change, 4 of the students were using verbal strategies to get extra time to think about their answers, to choose an appropriate answer, to construct a sentence, etc.

ITEM # 3

13. Compensatory behavior

13.2 The students used gestures that substitute, complete or regulate the verbal production.



The first time this instrument was given to the teachers, they said that their students did not use any gesture that substitute, complete or regulates the verbal production, but in the diary of the investigator it was observed that some of them were substituting their verbal production with gestures. This time it was observed that 4 of the 5 students were using gestures in order to substitute, regulate and complete their verbal production.

Students did not use too much facial expressions during the classes, but when they watched the videos in lesson 1, 2 and 5 they liked to sing and make movements (something like dancing). In addition, they showed some expressions in the class of greetings in order to complete their verbal production, copying the expressions of the teacher when she taught them some vocabulary of greetings.

Example: When the teacher explained the greeting: "Good morning!" she smiled and made a little movement with her hand. During the Role-play activity some of them were using

exactly the same expression of the teacher to say "Good morning!" which is actually good because it shows an advance on language pragmatics usage.

Carr et al (2016) present two definitions by The World Health Organization's International Classification of Diseases in which he presents the fact that these students struggle with some social factors (these social factor are reflected in their communication too):

a) Deficit in intellectual functions, such as...experiential learning, confirmed by both clinical assessment and individualized standard intelligence testing.

b) Deficits in adaptive functioning that result in failure to meet developmental and sociocultural standards for personal independence and social responsibility. Without support, the adaptive deficit limit functioning in one or more activities of daily life, such as communication, social participation, and independent living across multiple environments such as home, schools, work and community.

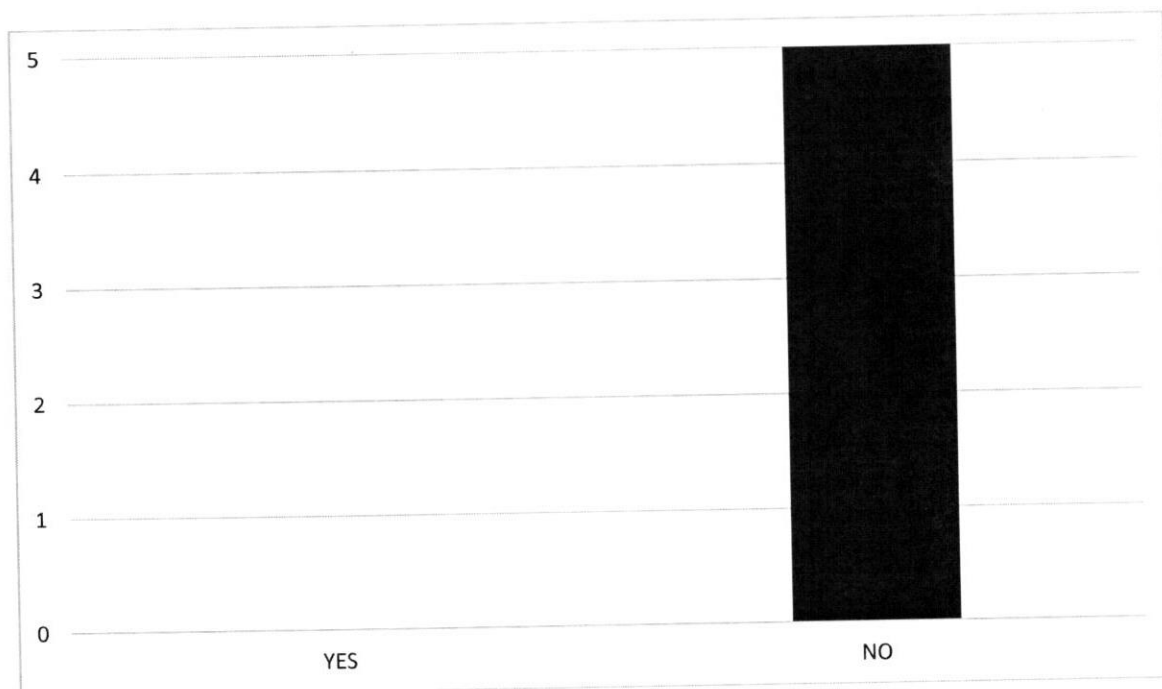
c) For a definite diagnosis of mental retardation there should be a reduced level of intellectual functioning resulting in diminished ability to adapt to the daily demands of the normal social environment.

For this reason Role-plays can be very effective to teach them how to react in the every day life.

ITEM # 4

14. Rectification and meta-pragmatic awareness

3.1 The speaker tries to correct his own sentence when they result problematic.



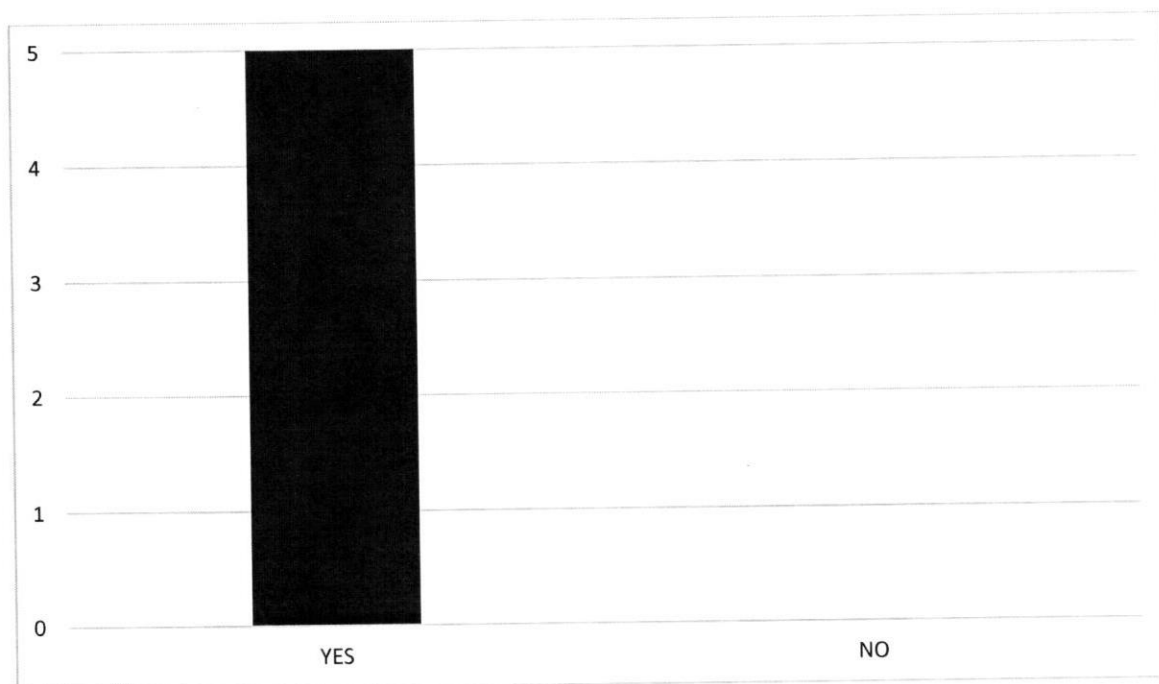
The first time that this instrument was implemented the teachers responded that none of the 5 students try to correct their own sentences and it was mentioned that this type of meta-pragmatic awareness was not included in the guide-list of observation and was not observed while using the third instrument of investigation (The diary of the investigator).

This time the results did not vary, but it could be noticed once during the first lesson (Friendship) that one of the students corrected one of her classmates that made a mistake in some Wh-questions.

ITEM #5

2. Principle of cooperation: generalized and particularized implicatures.

4.1 The information he provides is truthful.

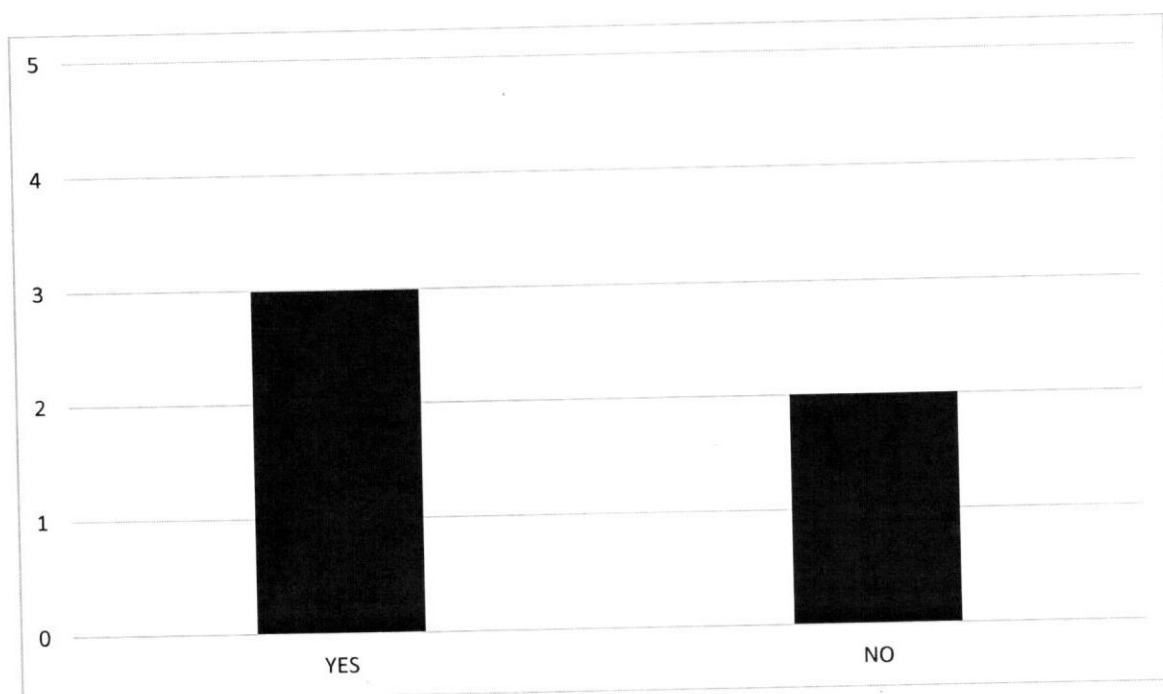


The first time that this instrument was applied all the teachers agreed that the 5 students provide truthful information. This time during the application of the lesson number 4 they had to share experiences of their lives in home and they provided truthful information even if there was something embarrassing for them, so the results did not change.

ITEM # 6

4.Principle of cooperation: generalized and particularized implicatures.

4.2 The information is provided in a clear, orderly and unambiguous way.



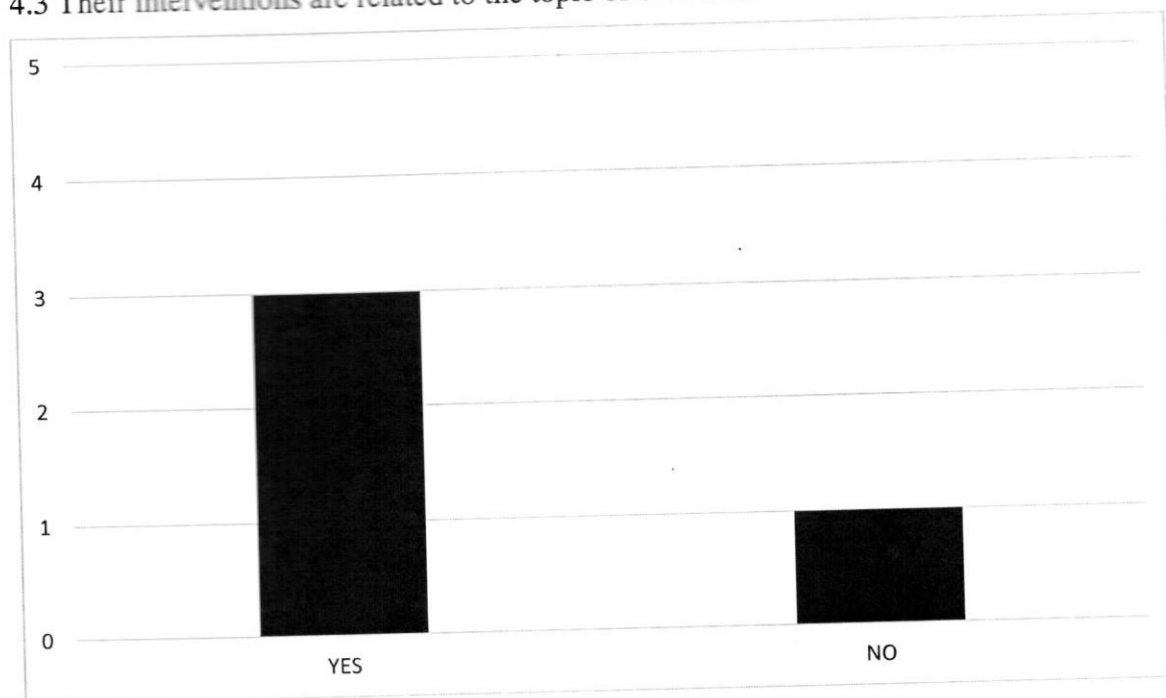
The first time that this instrument was applied the teachers responded that just one of their students was able to communicate in a clear and unambiguous way in the foreign language, but during the implementation of the proposal's activities 3 of them could responded in a clear way most of the time. This could be because the vocabulary needed to respond was provided in a very specific and clear way. In addition, a specific context was provided (the Role-plays) to respond, so they just had to pick the most appropriate answer.

Despite of the vocabulary and the specific context provided to use it there were 2 students that had several difficulties in communicating in a clear and unambiguous way. 1 of these 2 having no idea of how to communicate clear even with help.

ITEM # 7

4.Principle of cooperation: generalized and particularized implicatures.

4.3 Their interventions are related to the topic of conversation.



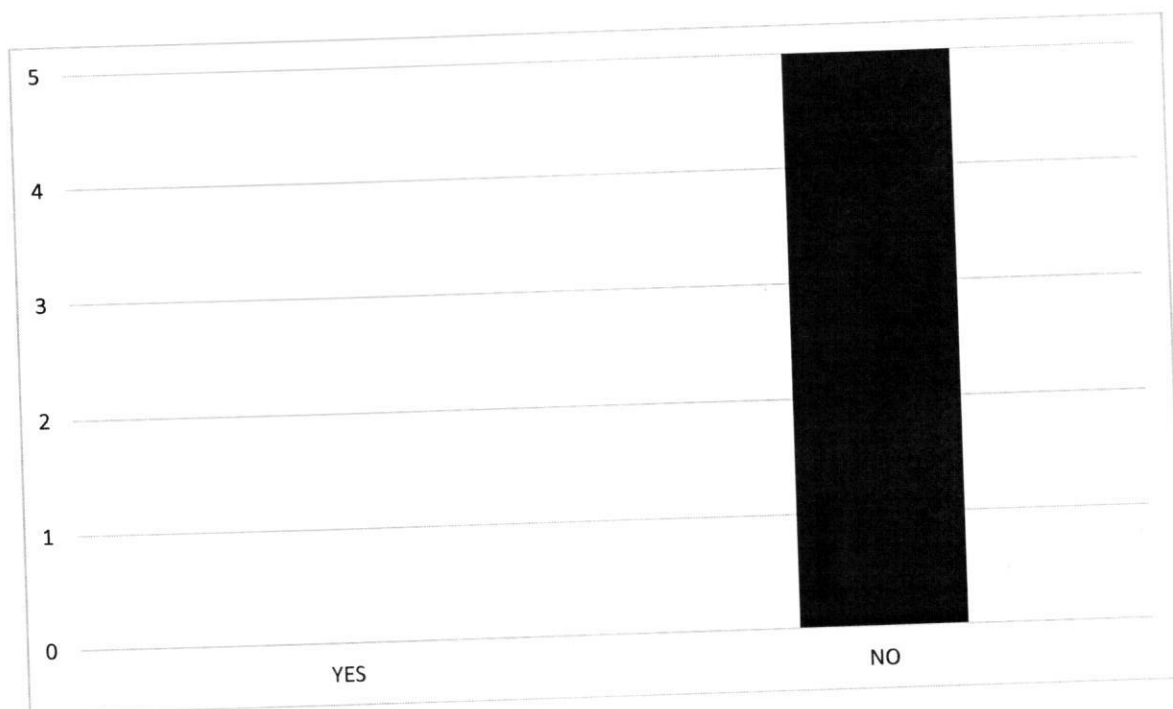
All the 5 students were taken apart to apply the proposal, so they felt more confident to talk and they were talking about everything (just one of them was quiet all the time), but taking into account just the time where the activities were being realized 3 of them were very concentrated on following the conversation around the different topics, one of them was suddenly asking questions such as “Maestra por qué tiene esos colores?” Or “Maestra dónde vive?” that had nothing to do with the topic in class, and another student was just quiet and if the teacher asked him something he couldn’t answer.

One of the most appropriate examples is the Lesson number 4 where they were asked to share personal experiences about their time at the dinner table at home in their mother tongue. Three of them were participating by sharing comments even when it was not their turn, their interventions were related to the topic all the time during the activity, the other 2 students just share information if the teacher asked them.

ITEM # 8

2. Conventional implicit: lexicalized inferences

5.1 Understands and/or correctly used lexicalized expressions or idioms.

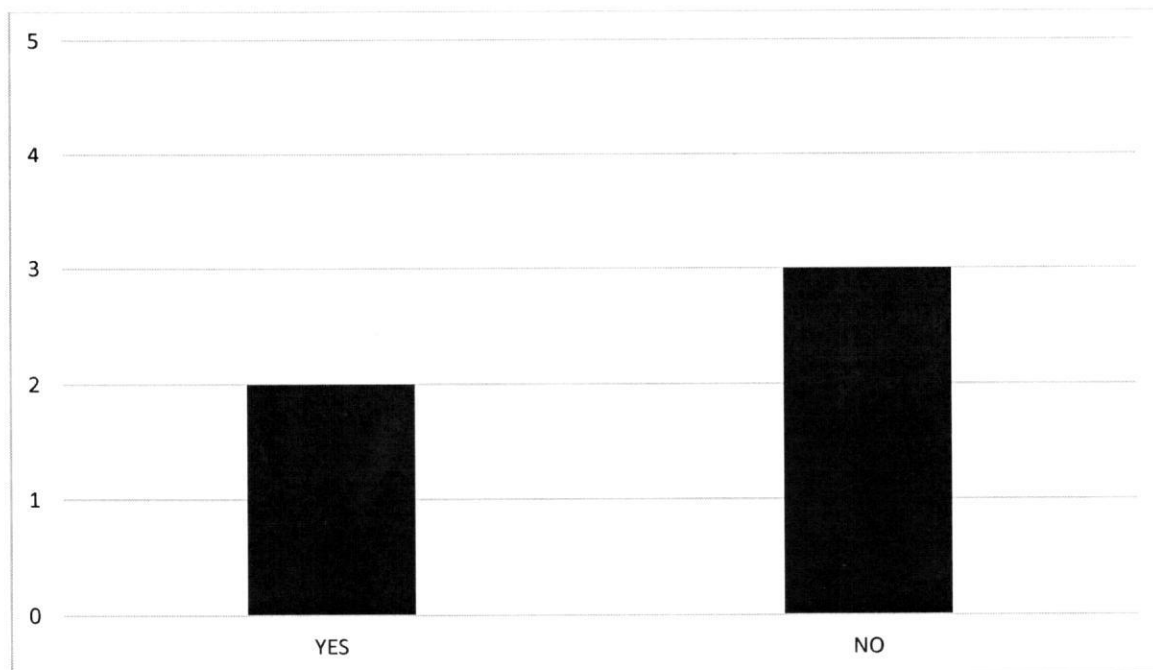


This is a hard statement to analyze due to the first time teachers responded that none of the 5 students used lexicalized expressions or idioms and even when the same results were recollected the second time, it could be different if some idioms would be added to the vocabulary presented in the classes and it could be asked to be applied during the activities of Role-plays, but the results did not change with the proposal's implementation.

ITEM # 9

15. Textual superstructures

6.1 When narrating does not omit relevant events, presents the characters appropriately, places their actions temporally, and introduces the information in the logical and chronological order in the development of the events.



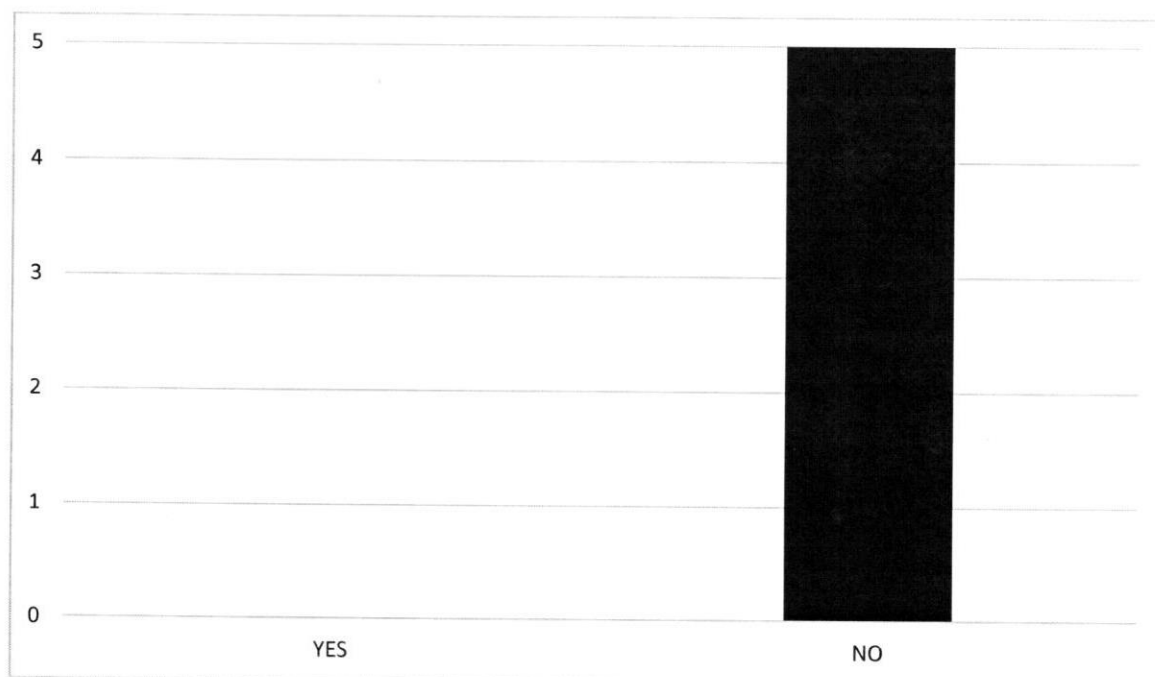
This aspect could be easily observed during lesson number 4. 4 of the students participate, 3 of them were spontaneously participating and one of them, as mentioned before, just provided information when she asked something specific, but they had difficulties in introducing information in a chronological way, for example, during the conversation one of them said: “Mi familia y yo cenamos juntos, cenamos tacos, mi papa llega tarde del trabajo...” so even when they were participating they had difficulties in presenting a clear and chronological narration.

In comparison with the first results there is a small difference due to 2 of the students could narrate the events in a simple and clear way.

ITEM # 10

16. Lexical understanding

7.1 The speaker can understand a wide range of vocabulary

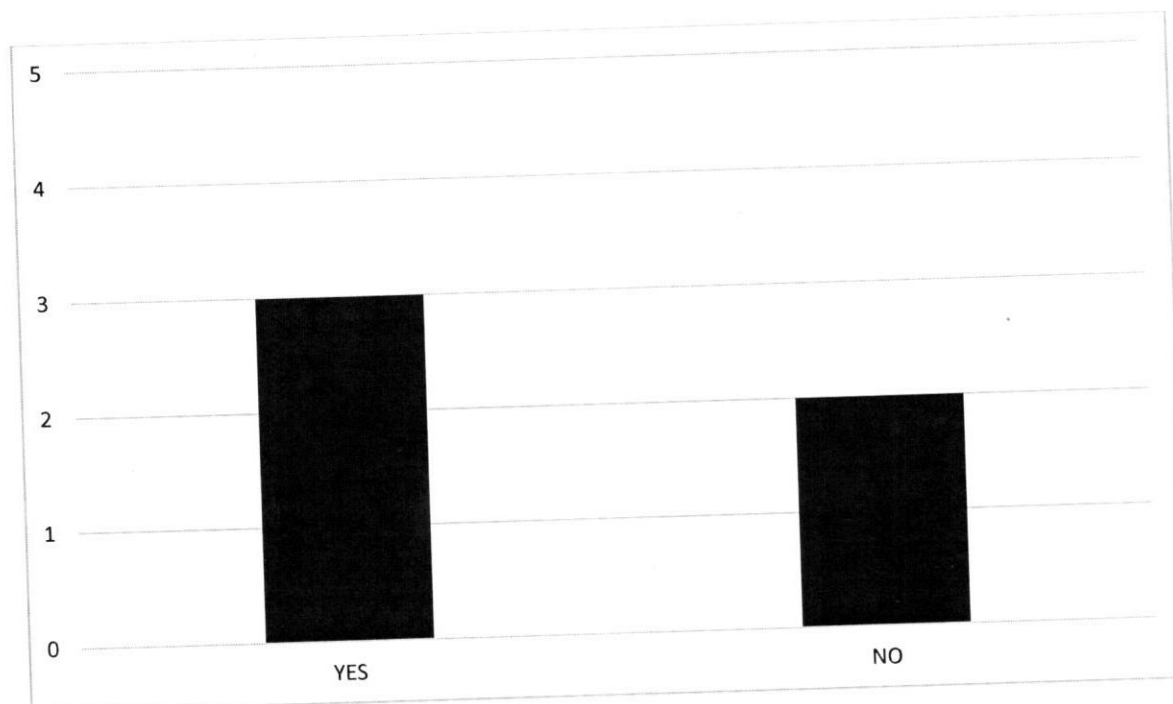


Once again, this is a hard statement to analyze, the results during the application of this instrument indicated that according to Carr et al (2016) students have a very short vocabulary and the teachers indicated that none of the 5 students can understand a wide range of vocabulary, but by presenting the vocabulary they had to use and explaining the meaning of the words and phrases it was easy for them to understand it, but in this personal analysis it seems to me that this fact cannot be generalized until the point of saying that the students can understand a wide range of vocabulary, but just that they could understand the specific number of words or phrases as they were explained during the class.

ITEM # 11

17. Morphology and word formation.

8.1 The speaker construction of the words is complete, using properly noun completions, adjectives and verbs, respecting the concordances of time, gender or number, as well as articles.



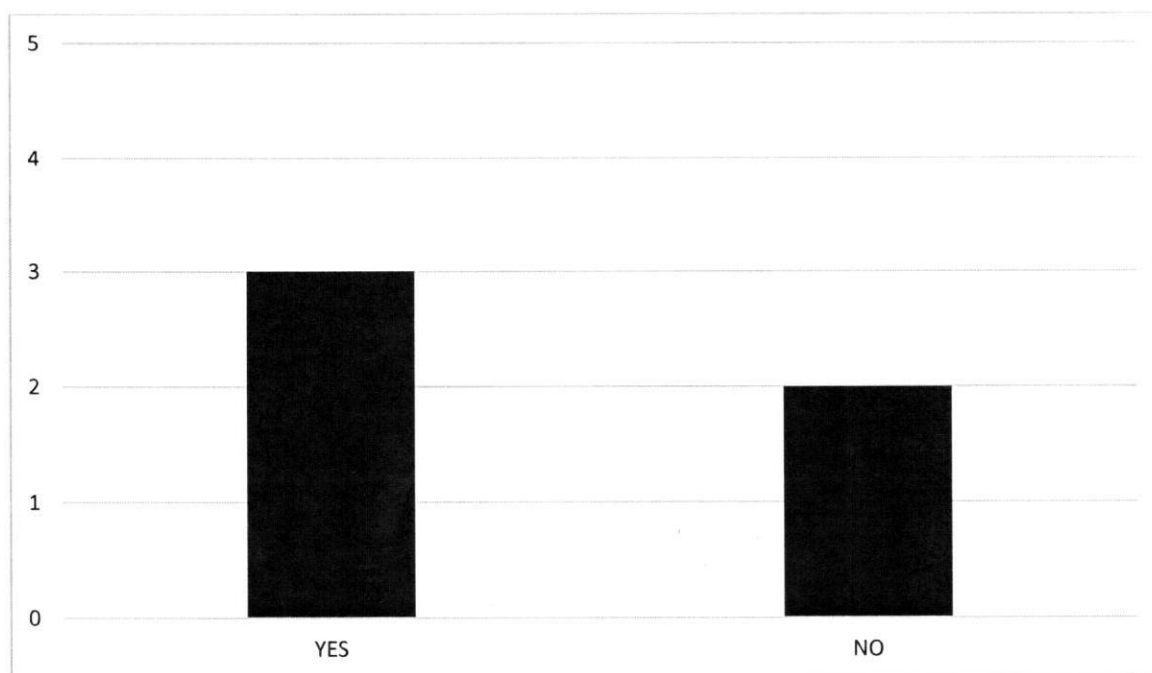
The results of the first application of the instrument reflected that none of the students could construct sentences or phrases in a correct way, but this time by providing the structures they had to use and a specific context three of them could respond with the appropriate sentence structure, adjectives, verbs, etc. But taking into account that the answers were previously explained by the teacher, that the context limited the possible answers and that they had the constructed sentences and questions as options to use while responding or asking.

For example, they had the phrase: I like ___ on the board just to complete with a noun. During the Role-play if one of the students asked to his/her classmate "What do you like?" The other student knew the answer because it was previously taught and practiced.

ITEM # 12

18. Syntax and grammatical construction

9.1 His construction of phrases and sentences is conventional and uses complete structure statements, both in sentences (subject+predicate) as in minor constituents.



This aspect is very similar to the last one. The first time that this instrument was applied the teachers responded that none of the 5 students could use complete structure statements, but this time, as it was mentioned before, with the structures provided they were able to use them in a correct way. According to Carr et al (2016) the results provided by the teachers the first time are normal due to students with intellectual disability have problems with limited sentence structure.

Students with intellectual disability have several difficulties on acquire a foreign language structure; this is one of the reasons of why Role-plays can be very helpful by limiting the possibilities for answer, by providing contexts of the real life and by providing specific options to answer and then to be applied in the real life.

ITEM # 13

19. Conversational participation rate

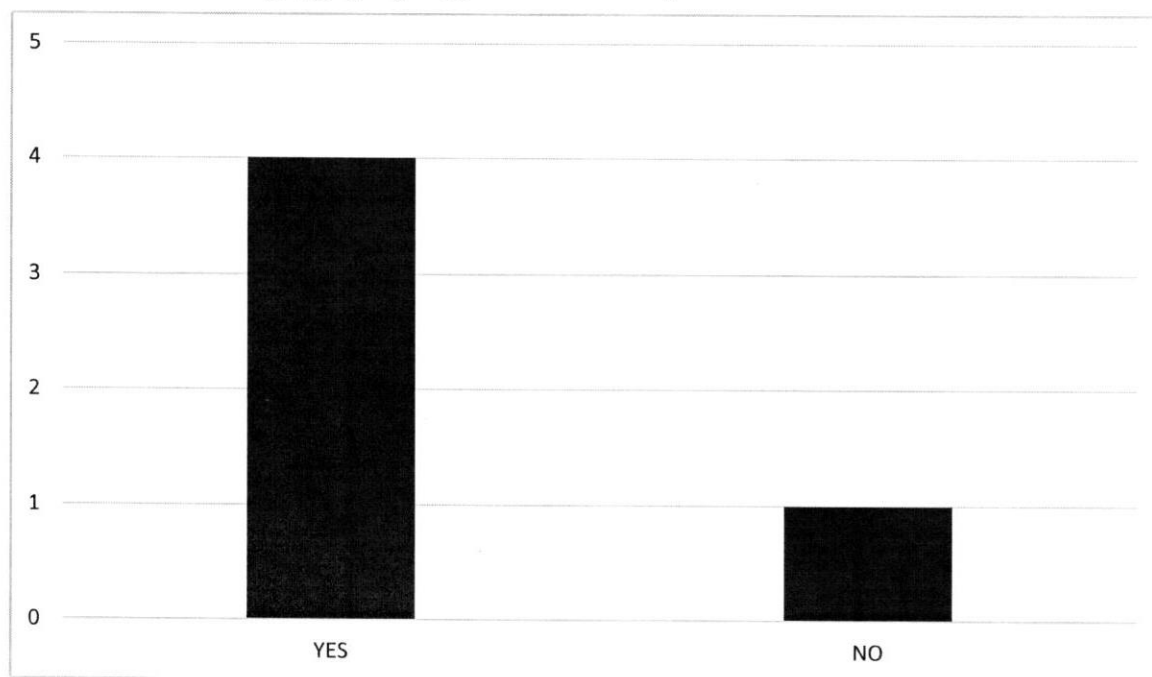
10.1 The speaker's level of verbal participation in a conversation is proportional to that of the other participants.

This aspect is not taken into account due to this second time of application of the instrument there were no other students but the 5 students with intellectual disability.

ITEM # 14

20. Natural gesture

11.1 His use of gestures, facial expressions and non-verbal communication complements and matches language properly, but does not replace it.



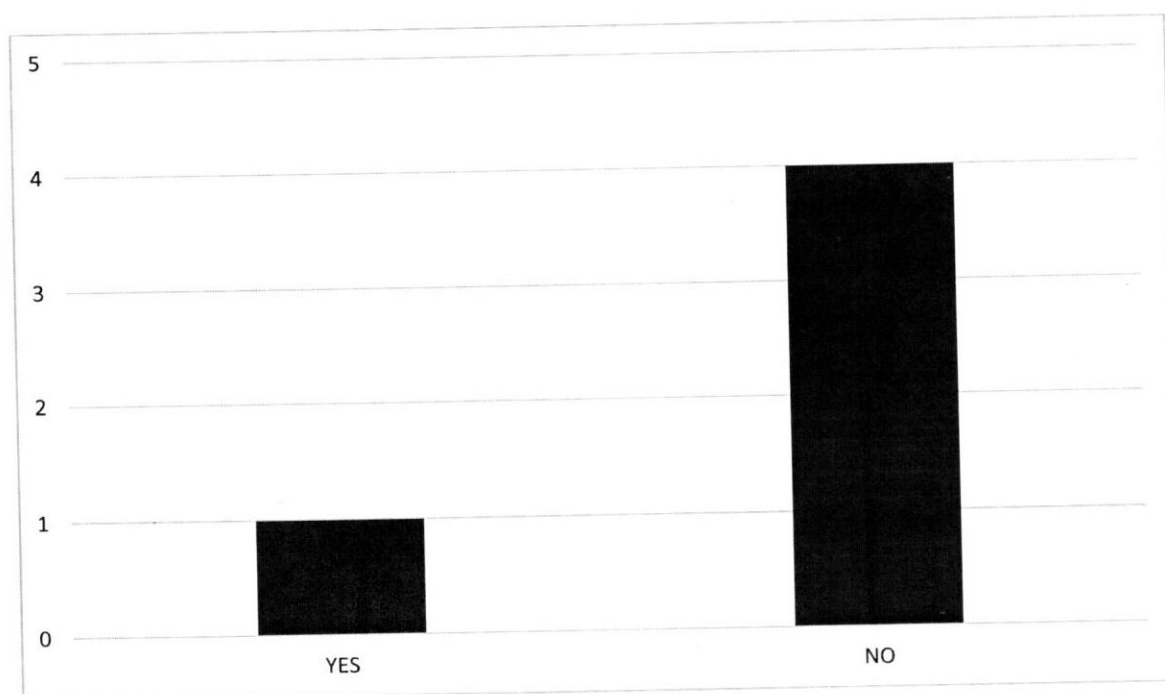
The first time of application of this instrument, the teachers responded that 3 of the 5 students were using non-verbal communication that complements and matches language properly, but those not replace it, statement that seemed to be contradictory with their answer in item # 3 were

they say that students do not use any gesture or expression when speaking. This time, during the observation the results were very similar to those in item # 3: Students were copying the facial expression and even the intonation of the teacher while she was teaching them some phrases. At the time of working at the Role-play activity 4 of them were using facial expression in order to complement their communication.

ITEM # 15

21. Communicative use of sight

12.1 Uses the sight communicatively, to confirm listening and understanding, to give in or ask for the turn.



The first time that this instrument was applied the teachers responded that just one of the students uses sight communicatively, to confirm listening and understanding, to give in or ask for the truth. This time the results did not change, the majority of the students do not even see you when they are talking.

5. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

During the development of the current research the questions of investigations were answered showing that there is a real problem of investigation. This problem was analyzed during the analysis of data collection, where the theory was seen in the practice. The answers to the two questions of investigations are sustained primarily by Carr et al (2016) who mentioned the problems of language acquisition and social problems in students with intellectual disability affect the learning of a foreign language:

Deficit in intellectual functions, such as ... experiential learning, confirmed by both clinical assessment and individualized standard intelligence testing, deficits in adaptive functioning that result in failure to meet developmental and sociocultural standards for personal independence and social responsibility. Without support, the adaptive deficit limit functioning in one or more activities of daily life, such as communication, social participation, and independent living across multiple environments such as home, schools, work and community and reduced level of intellectual functioning resulting in diminished ability to adapt to the daily demands of the normal social environment.

This theory was confirmed by the data analysis in chapter 3 by applying 3 instruments for research: a questionnaire, a rubric for observation and a diary for observation too. While applying the questionnaire to the teachers and observing the students with intellectual disability in their classes, the deficits mentioned by Carr et al (2016) were seen in the inclusive classrooms, where students with intellectual disability were having several difficulties on understanding and using English as a foreign language.

The questions and observation were primarily focused on language pragmatics. By applying the instruments and analyzing the results it was concluded that these students could memorize words or phrases in a foreign language, but had several difficulties at the pragmatic language level. This same problem is shown in the theoretical background of Kasher and Meilijson (1996) where the research is focused on students with autism.

According to the website of the British Council (BBC) the communicative approach is based on the idea that learning language successfully comes through having to communicate real meaning, so the proposal revolves around the idea of providing the teachers with strategies that can develop the communication of real meaning in their foreign language, the development of language pragmatics instead of just a list of words or grammar structures.

According to the theory of the communicative approach and also according to the results obtained in the data analysis, activities based on Role-plays were developed in order to see if these activities could help students with the development of their language pragmatics in the foreign language. The didactic proposal included: 5 lessons based on different speech acts using Role-plays, which were the main activity for practicing language pragmatics.

In another hand, some limitations were presented for the implementation of the proposal: the time, it was just possible to develop 5 classes for these students due to their schedules in school and the deliverance date of the current research. In addition, it was not possible to apply them in the inclusive classroom, again because of the school's schedule, but it was possible to apply the proposal with the students apart of their classmates.

By applying the proposal, it could be seen that students need clear explanations about the context before they can use language in an appropriate way; it could be also observed that even when they have problems on achieving social factors in communication such as using the correct expressions or intonation when saying a specific phrase or question, they are able to copy non-verbal expressions, gestures and even intonation where this is being taught in order to complement the communication.

In addition, another important result was primarily that it is easy for them to use language in an appropriate way (language pragmatics) when the context is explained and limited. This means that when they can understand the context and they have memorized how to act in a

situation such as that it would be easy for them to communicate in an appropriate way. Sadly, people cannot be limited to a specific number of responses and this is a fact that affects critically students with intellectual disability due to it is very complicated for them to adapt their language to new situations.

One of the limitations observed after analyzed the results is that the activities implemented with the proposal did not change anything on aspects such as “correcting themselves in language errors” or language awareness; what they did was more related to copy expressions and language, but those aspects that are related to metacognitive language strategies can be taken into account in a future investigation in order to develop a more meaningful communication.

As a recommendation for future investigations this metacognitive aspect of the language can be included in the study of language pragmatics development in students with intellectual disability. Another aspect that can be taken into account is the influence of the age in the critical thinking and the development of language pragmatics in the acquisition of the foreign language in students that present intellectual disability. A new field to investigate that can provide more meaningful and deep knowledge about the topic could be neuro-linguistics.

Another recommendation is to explore Neuro-linguistics, due to this field can provide more information about how language pragmatics are acquire in order to develop better strategies to help teachers with inclusive classrooms to help students with intellectual disability. Hypothesis based on neuro-linguistics can lead to a deeper investigation and maybe to deeper solutions. As another recommendation, Role-plays, could be more helpful with more time of implementation and could show better results and better strategies if they would be implemented in an inclusive classroom.

As conclusions for this research it has to be mentioned that certainly it was demonstrated the necessity of the development of language pragmatics on students with intellectual disability, such as Hemilse (2011) revealed in her research: language pragmatics is necessary in order to communicate effectively. Students with intellectual disability need to develop language pragmatics in order to communicate.

It can be also mentioned that using strategies based on language pragmatics facilitates the foreign language usage of students with language disability, but this facilitation is reduced just to some aspects of language acquisition. Speech acts and Role-plays can be helpful for students with intellectual disability to better comprehend their world and how to communicate with it, but these activities cannot help them to interpret the world in order to develop by their own an effective communication and this is a necessary skill nowadays.

According to the theory, observations, analysis and results the real contribution of the current research depends on what every teacher seeks to develop in his/her students. If the teacher seeks for a way to explain the immediate contexts that surround the student in the everyday life and tries to help him to use language in an appropriate way, but limited context, then the strategies presented in the proposal of the current research can facilitate the use of certain speech acts in English in specific situations.

REFERENCES

- American English Apologies. (n.d.) Retrieved from:
<http://carla.umn.edu/speechacts/apologies/american.html>
- Arsenault, N. Anderson, G. (2005). *Fundamentals of educational research*. Pennsylvania: The Falmer Press.
- Bodgan, R. and Knopp S. (2012). *Qualitative research for education*. United States: Pearson education.
- Budden, J. (2018). Role-play. British Council (BBC). Retrieved from:
<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/role-play>
- Harris C. J. (2010). *Intellectual disability: A guide for families and professionals*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Cárdenas Aguilar T. and Macías Barraza A. (2014). *Marco conceptual y experiencias de la educación especial en México*. Ciudad de México: Instituto Universitario Anglo-español.
- Carr, A., Linehan Ch., O'Reilly G., Walsh P. and McEvoy J. (2016). *The handbook of intellectual disability and clinical psychology practice*. New York: Routledge.
- Centered for Advanced Research of Language Acquisition from the University of Minnesota.
 Retrieved from: <http://carla.umn.edu/speechacts/descriptions.html>
- Communicative Approach. (2018). Communicative approach. British Council (BBC). Retrieved from: <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/communicative-approach>
- Cullen R. H. and Hill R. (2012). *The learner-centered curriculum. Design and implementations*. USA: Jossey-Bass.

- DiBartolomeo. 2017. *Second and Foreign language pragmatics*. Wlpragmatics. Retrieved from: <http://wlpragmatics.pbworks.com/w/page/99620139/Second%20and%20Foreign%20Language%20Pragmatics%20Wiki>
- Dopitova, Hana. (2007) . *Meeting the needs of students with special educational needs in mixed classrooms*. Bachelor thesis. Masaryk University BRNO. Czech Republic.
- Halliwell, M. (2003). *Supporting children with special educational needs*. New York: David Fulton Publishers.
- Hemilse Acevedo, M. (2011). *Lenguaje y mundo social: La relevancia pragmática del lenguaje. Nómadas*. Revista Crítica de Ciencias Sociales y Jurídicas, 2.
- Kasher A., Meilijson S. (1996). *Autism and pragmatics of language*. Department of philosophy. Tel Aviv university, Tel Aviv 69978.
- Latorre, A. (2008). *La investigación-acción*. Barcelona, España: Graó.
- Levinson, Stephen C. (1983). *Pragmatics*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Maite Fernández Urquiza, F. D. (2015). *Protocolo Rápido de Evaluación Pragmática Revisado*. Valencia, España: Guada Impresores, S.L.
- Mira, Ariel. (2014). *Defining pragmatics*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Morris, Charles. (1977). *Semiotics and semantics*. Indiana University: Indiana University Press.
- Oracle, P. (17th de October de 2017). *Project Oracle*. Retrieved from: https://project-oracle.com/uploads/files/How_to_create_an_observation_gui
- Punch, Keith F and Oancea, Alis. (2014). *Introduction to research methods in education*. Australia: Sage publishing.
- Roberto Hernández S. , C. F. (2010). *Metodología de la investigación*. México, D.F.: McGrawHill.

- Searle, John R. (1969). *Speech acts: An essay in the philosophy of language*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Warnock, Mary. (2010). *Special educational needs, a new look*. London: Continuum.
- Wearmouth, Janice. (2009). *A beginning teacher's guide to special educational needs*. New York: Open University Press.
- Wearmouth, Janice. (2015). *Special educational needs and disability: The basics*. New York: Routledge.

Appendix #1

OBSERVATION
GUIDE-LIST

* School: _____
 * Grade: _____
 * Date: _____
 * Number of
 students w/intellectual
 disability in the class: _____

*Objective(s):

1. To describe the specific difficulties that students with intellectual disability present on acquiring a language.
2. To describe the social interaction problems that students with intellectual disability present, and how they affect to the learning of a second language.

ASPECTS TO OBSERVE	F R E Q U E N T L Y	O C C A S I O N A L L Y	N E V E R	NOTES
1. Language Pragmatics in use: a) Students are using the second language spontaneously.				
b) Students are using simple English classroom phrases or questions, such as <i>May I go to the bathroom?</i> or <i>I'm done.</i>				
c) Students understand how to apply grammar and vocabulary in a communicative activity.				

d) Students understand the appropriate context and time to use those basic phrases and questions.				
2. Second language acquisition problems:				
a) Students seem to understand while the teacher is talking like the others do.				
b) Students are working and following the teacher's instructions in the English class.				
c) Students are answering simple English questions from the teacher.				
d) Students are working in the class.				
3. Lack of basic social skills reflected in their communication:				
a) Students are talking during the class (using second or first language)				
b) Students show any type of communication. (Write down details on the notes box)				
c) Students are expressing opinions, feelings and ideas (in				

their first or second language) in a different way than their classmates do. (Write down some examples on the notes box.				
--	--	--	--	--

Appendix #2

This questionnaire aims to know the understanding and use of language pragmatics of students with intellectual disability in their foreign language (English). It is an adaptation of the *Protocolo Rápido de Evaluación Pragmática* (Gallardo 2008b, 2009).

Date: _____

Teacher: _____

Grade: _____

Student: _____

Instructions:

While answering, think about what happens most of the time in your English classroom. There are not correct or incorrect answers. They simply reflect your personal opinion. All questions present two options: YES and NO, in case of choosing YES write an evidence as an example of your answer. Place a check mark (✓) for the chosen option.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your answers will be anonymous and absolutely confidential.

Thank you so much for your cooperation!

Does the verbal use of the student fits with the following observations?	YES	NO	EVIDENCE
ENUNCIATIVE PRAGMATICS			
Sub level of speech acts			
1. Production of speech acts			
1.1 The speaker finds the words he is looking for and is able to make use of the grammar of the foreign language to convey meaning.			
2. Compensatory behavior			
2.1 The speaker uses verbal strategies that allow him to gain extra time for the construction of his verbal emissions.			
2.2 The speaker uses gestures that substitute, complete or regulate the verbal production.			
3. Rectification and meta-pragmatic awareness			

3.1 Tries to correct his own sentences when they result problematic			
4. Principle of cooperation: generalized and particularized implicatures.			
4.1. The information he provide is truthful. (Implicature of quality)			
4.2 The information is provided in a clear, orderly and unambiguous way (implicature of manner).			
4.3 Their interventions are related to the topic of conversation (implicature of relationship)			
5. Conventional implicit: lexicalized inferences			
5.1 Understand and / or correctly use lexicalized expressions or idioms.			
TEXTUAL PRAGMATICS			
Sub level of coherence			
6. Textual superstructures			
6.1 When narrating does not omit relevant events, presents the characters appropriately, places their actions temporally, and introduces the information in the logical and chronological order in the development of events (narrative superstructure).			
7. Lexical understanding			
7.1 The speaker can understand a wide range of vocabulary.			
8. Morphology and word formation.			
8.1 His construction of the words is complete, using properly noun completions, adjectives and verbs, respecting the concordances of time, gender or number, as well as articles.			
9. Syntax and grammatical construction			
9.1 His construction of phrases and sentences is conventional and uses complete structure statements, both in sentences (subject + predicate) as in minor constituents.			
INTERACTIVE PRAGMATICS			
10. Conversational participation rate.			
10.1 The speaker's level of verbal participation in the conversation (number of shifts and words) is proportional to that of other participants.			

11. Natural gesture			
11.1 His use of gestures, facial expression and non-verbal communication complements and matches language properly, but does not replace it.			
12. Communicative use of sight			
12.1 Uses the sight communicatively, to confirm listening and understanding, to give in or ask for the turn.			